

"Campus music comes from students' hearts and minds, it reflects students' sincere and original emotions."

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There are few traces of modernization to be seen, the furnishings in each household have a distinct flavor of the 1960s.

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A classic tale of jealousy and revenge, *Salome* is ideally suited to the form of flamenco dance.

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## Greece Sees Successful Olympiad in Beijing

By Zhou Ying

Since the close of the Athens Olympic Games, the eyes of the world have turned to Beijing, scrutinizing the city's ability to host the 2008 Olympics. *Beijing Today* spoke with Greek deputy minister of national economy and finance Petros Doukas on Saturday about his country's experience hosting the Olympic Games.

**Beijing Today: Now the Athens Olympics are over, can you tell us how much Greece spent exactly?**

**Petros Doukas:** It depends how you measure things, and for the Olympic Games, it is not easy to measure. The total cost of this event is about nine billion euros, which was nearly all financed by the central government. However, more than four billion went through the improvement of infrastructure, such as stadiums and subways. These are ... not things that you spent the money and it is completely gone. So maybe we should call it investment instead of cost. Therefore it is very difficult to determine the exact cost, because the basic infrastructure construction will remain over the next few generations.

**BT: What about the income from the Athens Olympics?**

**Doukas:** The income from the Athens Olympic Games is roughly about two billion euros, mainly coming from ticket sales, sponsorship and television rights. For Beijing, I would not be surprised if you can manage to more than double that figure, because the Olympic spirit is growing, and interest in the Olympics games will attract more people.

**BT: How are you going to repay the debt accumulated as a result of the games? Will this become a burden for the Greek people?**

**Doukas:** We are now trying to capitalize some of the venues, making sure that most of the stadiums can be fully used by the public. We will follow experts' ideas on what to do with these stadiums. Then we will issue tenders, and we will ask people to come up with complete proposals and from those proposals, we will pick the ones that are most beneficial for the country.

In addition, I have just mentioned that most of the cost was for infrastructure construction, and that will improve general productivity in Greece, making Athens easier to go from one side to the other. So there are a lot of indirect benefits beyond revenue from the games.

**BT: What kind of role do the volunteers play in the Olympic Games,**



Photo by Zhang Qi

## Alarm Sounds for Yangtze River

By Chu Meng

China's longest river is facing a pollution crisis that could affect not only the tens of millions of people living along its banks, but could also have an impact on people living as far away as Beijing and Shandong Province.

"Unless action is taken soon, the Yangtze River may become as heavily polluted as the Yellow River. Its ecosystem will deteriorate and may collapse within 10 years." This was the dire warning issued by an expert at a workshop held to demonstrate the achievements of a campaign to protect the Yangtze, organized by the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and China Development Institute on October 22 in Shanghai.

"The Yangtze River Basin urgently needs environmental protection. As an important economic zone, China must depend on the Yangtze River if it wants to become a fully developed country, because the river has rich water resources, transportation capacity and also biological resources," said Zhang Qi, acting president of the China Development Institute and sponsor of the 12-day campaign.

Accompanied by a team of environmental protection experts and biology specialists, Zhang embarked on an investigative tour of the country's longest river to examine the ecological situation from Chengdu, which marks the beginning of the river's upper reaches, to Shanghai, where it flows into the sea, 3,000 kilometers downstream. "Our purpose is very simple. We intended to raise the public's awareness of the acute pollution in the river," Zhang told *Beijing Today* Tuesday.

"Large-scale hydro dam construction has brought big changes," Zhang said. Lakes along the river have been partially reclaimed to make farmland, reducing the area of some by more than half. With a large population and rapidly developing industry, both industrial and human

waste is discharged into the river untreated. As a result, the bio-diversity of the river has been decreasing.

"Three years ago, I went on a field trip to a town in Jiangsu. People lived on fishing there. However, when our team went there this time, fishermen could only harvest two-and-a-half kilograms of fish a day. They told me that it was because the water in the Yangtze had become polluted," Zhang said.

According to an investigation launched by the China Development Research Institute last year, pollution in the Yangtze River has affected the water quality of more than 500 towns and cities. A newsletter released by the Shanghai Environmental Protection Bureau said two water-drawing sites in Shanghai have been affected by pollution in the upper reaches of the river.

An official with the bureau who declined to give his name to *Beijing Today* said "Shanghai, located near the mouth of the river, is both a victim and a cause of pollution." Ten years ago, the city was able to process only about 15 percent of the sewage it produced, meaning that about 85 percent of the city's raw sewage was being discharged into the river. But by the end of 2004, the treatment capacity is expected to reach 90 percent.

Zhang stressed, "What surprised me more is not the serious situation but the low awareness about the problem of people living along the Yangtze River." Many industrial plants, such as steelworks, refineries, paper

mills and shipyards have been built along the Yangtze River because of the easy transportation it offers and the "convenient" way to discharge waste. The aim off this campaign, said Zhang, was to raise people's awareness of the need to protect this river that in ancient times was referred to as "Mother River."

"I was totally shocked by the indifference of local governments to the problem," Zhang said, "Many officials only boasted about local economic development, invested capital and annual GDP. However when I asked them about the problems of sewage and waste discharge, their answer was very simple 'Contamination? No, they just discharge directly into the river!'"

It currently costs an average factory several million yuan to install a discharge purifying system that would meet the minimum standard set by the Environment Protection Bureau. For many of those privately-owned factories, that would effectively negate any profits made during the first three to ten years of operation, depending on its size.

Some factories even install a double layer of pipes for discharging waste, with clean water circling in the upper fake layer so as to fool inspectors from the local government and environment protection bureaus. The real waste is discharged directly into the river through the lower layer of pipes.

Lu Jiongxing, a professor from Xiamen University's School of Law said to *Beijing Today* Tuesday, "Pollution

problems have always been of concern in many governmental departments and social circles. Also many regulation methods and environmentally friendly solutions have been adopted. However, we can see no efficient outcome. Under such circumstances, legislation on the sustainable exploitation of the Yangtze River Basin water resources is the most necessary and urgent task faced by our government and law-making bodies."

According to Lu, the first draft of such a law has been finished, and has been submitted to the State Council. It consists of three main sections: setting legal standards for waste discharge, specifying punishment for breaches of those standards, and establishing a supervision and regulation organization.

He stressed, "This organization should be responsible for the upper, middle and lower reaches of the river. At present, different sections are under the regulation of various provincial governments, which frustrates the carrying out of coherent regulation work."

It is the realization of the sustainable exploitation of the Yangtze River water resources that crucially influences the sustainable development of the regional and national economy. This paper also sets up the legal framework in principle, and provides legal suggestions on the management system, the exchange of water rights, prevention of pollution and how to undo damage already caused by pollution.

It has been reported recently that in 2007 and 2010 respectively, water will start being pumped from the Yangtze to Shandong Province and Beijing, as part of China's largest ever water diversion project (see *Beijingers to Drink Yangtze River Water in 2010*, page 2.)

Therefore, protecting the water resource of the Yangtze River is not only an issue for the towns and cities along the river's banks, but also a matter that affects the lives of many millions of people in northern China.

**and how much do they save for the government?**

**Doukas:** There were a large number of volunteers this year, so we have spent a lot on them. You have to feed them, you have to transport them, and you have to give them clothes. Moreover, you have to spent time training them. However, we have saved a lot of money through the volunteers.

There are a lot of benefits. First of all, they are all younger people from universities. So they project a very nice image, and create a lot of interest. They are very good ambassadors for the games.

**BT: Some are calling a further integrated European market a common financial market for the whole of Europe. What is Greece's stand on that?**

**Doukas:** It's moving in that direction, but it cannot be forced. I believe, in some respects, that the market itself is looking for bigger, more liquid and more transparent changes. So the market itself is forcing such kind of changes to take place. It will be more market driven, and the government facility accelerates the process, rather than force that process to happen. So we allow the market forces to determine the changes.

**BT: Comparing Beijing to Athens four years ago, which city do you think is more prepared for the Olympic Games?**

**Doukas:** I think it is Beijing. Beijing now is much more advanced, and that is good for you. It's good because you have time to take advantage of venues. You should construct the stadiums as early as possible, and capitalize them before the Olympics really start.

I suggest that you attract as much private capital as possible to involve in the construction and management of these projects.

We are very much looking forward

to participating in this event. The rest of the world is very eager to come here to invest, and find out more about it. It is a huge and unexplored market, we need the market, and we need Chinese brain power, because Chinese, throughout history, have the history of brain power. That makes you very different, not because you have oil in your ground or abundant resources, your resources is brain power. I am sure the world needs that.

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# Personal Property Can Be Transferred Abroad

By Qiu Jiaoning

A new regulation allowing overseas Chinese and foreign inheritors to transfer their personal property abroad will take effect from December 1, an announcement on the People's Bank of China website Tuesday stated.

According to the regulation, Chinese citizens emigrating overseas will be able to convert their personal property into foreign currency and transfer it abroad. Till now, there has been no officially approved process for such transactions, with the result that some Chinese have been forced to use illegal methods to transfer their property when emigrating.

The regulation also stipulates that foreigners who inherit Chinese property are allowed to take their inheritance out of the country.

People who wish to transfer their property abroad should apply to any branch of the State Administration of Foreign Exchange if their property is valued at less than 500,000 yuan. For property worth over 500,000 yuan, applications must be lodged with administration's central office.

The regulation also stipulates that emigrants should transfer funds in stages, unless the total amount is less than 200,000 yuan.

At present, renminbi (RMB) can only be

freely converted into foreign currency for the purpose of foreign trade. Converting for financial gain is not permitted. As a result, most Chinese are rarely allowed to buy foreign currency and cannot invest in stocks, bonds or property abroad.

The change signifies a fresh move by China's financial authorities to allow a freer capital flow and a more flexible foreign exchange policy.

"The new rule allowing emigrants and foreigners to take money out of China will speed up the process of making RMB fully convertible. Property rights will be better protected by the rule," the announcement said .

## State Tightens Rules on Transfer Pricing

By Annie Wei

The State Administration of Taxation released a newly-revised regulation on control on transfer pricing last Thursday.

Analysts said that transfer pricing normally occurs as a result of subsidiaries of multinational companies maximizing benefit to the parent company through favorable product pricing, loan interest rates and assets transfer.

In 2002, Guangzhou Proctor and Gamble provided an interest-free loan to a related party from a 2 billion yuan loan it obtained from a bank in Guangdong Province; In 2003, the Guangzhou State Administration of Taxation required Guangzhou Proctor and Gamble to pay 596 million yuan tax, plus 81 million yuan redeemed income tax.

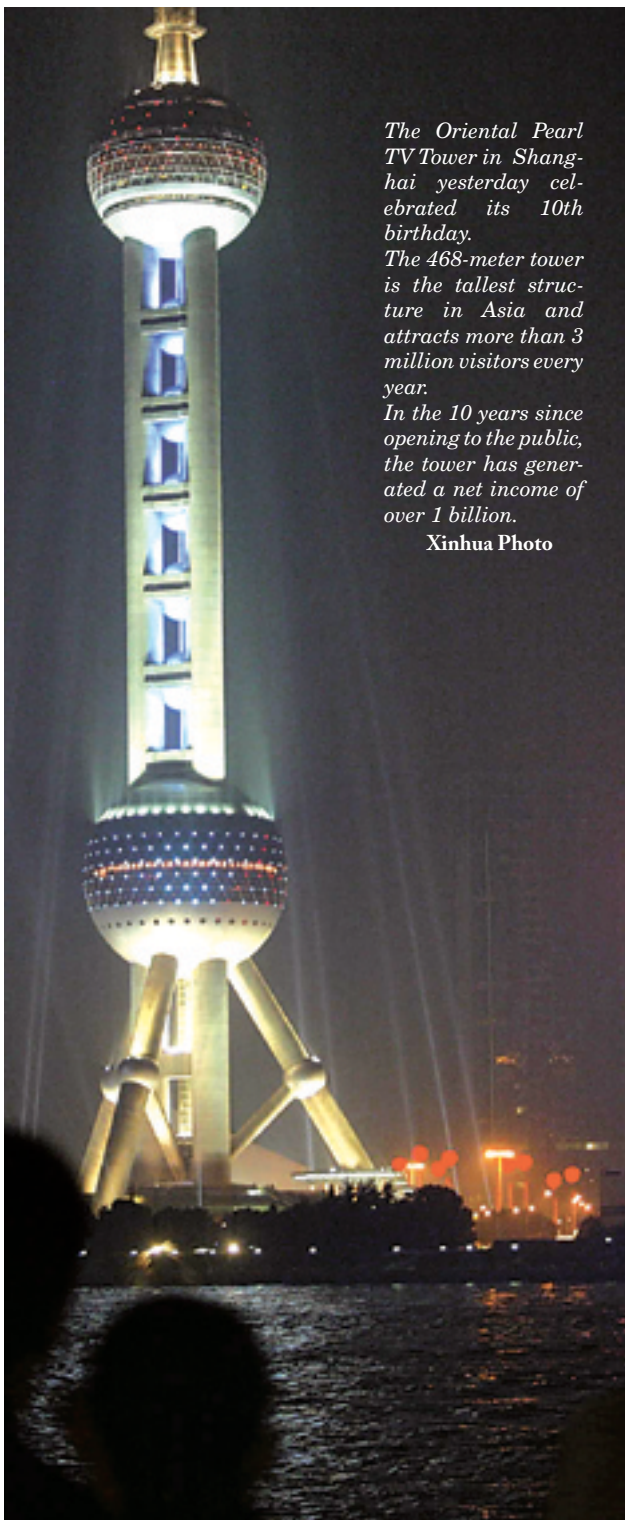
Many multinational companies purchase raw materials at an inflated price from related parties in the other countries and sell them at a low price to another related party in another country. In this way, the multinational company transfers its profit from the subsidiary company in China that loses money, into another subsidiary company in a country with a lower tax rate.

According to the Ministry of Commerce, half of the almost 500,000 registered foreign companies in China recorded a loss at the end of August 2004, the Beijing-based *Economic Observer* reported last Saturday.

Analysts quoted in the article said that many of those companies "lost" money for tax purposes, and that China loses around 20 billion yuan in tax annually as a result of transfer pricing multinational companies.

Caroline Liang, a senior auditor at PWC Beijing told *Beijing Today* Tuesday that the tax departments of many multinational companies are responsible for this type of taxation planning, and that in the past, it was very difficult to supervise multinational companies' pricing of products outside China.

Luo Zheng, a professor from the Central University of Finance and Economics was quoted in the *Economic Observer* article as saying that China is taking increasingly stricter measures on transfer pricing.



The Oriental Pearl TV Tower in Shanghai yesterday celebrated its 10th birthday. The 468-meter tower is the tallest structure in Asia and attracts more than 3 million visitors every year. In the 10 years since opening to the public, the tower has generated a net income of over 1 billion.

Xinhua Photo

## Report Predicts Promising Year for Foreign Trade

By Annie Wei

China's foreign trade is expected to exceed US \$1 trillion with a 30 percent growth rate this year, ranking third in the world, according to a report released last Friday.

The report, issued by the Ministry of Commerce and the China Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation, says China's import and export value in the first three quarters reached US \$828 billion, increasing 37 percent compared with the same period last year.

The European Union ranks as China's biggest trade partner, with US \$128 billion bilateral trade value; the United States, the second biggest trade partner with US \$88 billion bilateral trade value is China's biggest export market; while China's biggest source of imports is Japan, with US \$70 billion in bilateral trade, according to the report.

Products such as steel, automobiles, laptops and mobile phones contribute most to China's export trade; while resources lacking in China such as crude and refined

oil are the major imports.

The report attributed the rapidly growing foreign trade to China's micro-economic control policies, fast economic growth and the global economic recovery coupled with updated trade policies.

The report predicted that growth would slow in 2005, due to the global economic situation. It also said other issues could impact on China's international trade next year, such as ongoing international trade conflicts and new problems arising from tax rebates.

## Finland Seeks to Tighten Trade Ties

By Chu Meng

Finland is looking for new ways to further diversify its trade and economic cooperation with China in key areas of forest, energy and environmental protection, the country's foreign trade minister Paula Lehtomaki said at a press conference in Beijing Tuesday.

"Leading Finnish telecommunications companies such as Nokia have created great cooperative opportunities for both countries and we hope Finland and China can join efforts in more

areas," the minister said.

The trade minister is here to launch a three year trade promotion dubbed "Experience Finland" accompanied by the largest-ever Finnish business delegation to visit China. She also met with Vice-premier Wu Yi, and the two sides signed an investment protection agreement Monday.

Lehtomaki said at the press conference, "China's accession to the WTO opens up new perspectives for our mutual involvement in the world economy by making the investment environment more

attractive and more accessible for Finnish companies. China has become the most important market in Asia for Finland and Finland is the largest Nordic trading partner of China."

She revealed that Finland plans to open a new consulate in Guangzhou to help Finnish firms expand their markets and develop new business relationships in the southern part of China.

"The opening of the consulate is well on the track. We hope we will open it some time next year," she said.

## Interest Rate Rise on USD Term Deposits

By Sun Yongjian

The People's Bank of China, China's central bank issued an announcement on its website stating that from yesterday the ceiling for the one year US dollar deposit interest rate should be raised to 0.875 percent, an

increase of 0.312 percent.

The central bank also said it will no longer set the ceiling for the two-year interest rate on US dollar, euro, Japanese yen and HK dollar deposits. These rates will be set by the commercial banks

## Regulation Issued on Witness Protection

By Qiu Jiaoning

The People's Procuratorate of Baoan District, Shenzhen has issued a regulation on witness protection, the first of its kind in China, *Beijing News* reported Tuesday.

According to the current law, witnesses are only protected by the criminal law after their legal rights have been infringed. Until now, there have been no regulations covering the procedure, extent or duration of witness protection.

The report said that new regulation clearly stipulates the commencement, termination, responsibility, content and scope

of witness protection, as witnesses, together with evidence, are of great importance in solving criminal cases.

The protection procedure is divided into three stages: before, during and after court session. Under the regulation, courts can order 24-hour personal protection for witnesses who are deemed to be at risk or have been threatened.

The property, reputation and relatives of the witness should also come under the protection scope. Economic compensation will be offered to those who appear in court as witnesses in accordance with related regulations.

## Beijingers to Drink Yangtze River Water in 2010

By Deng Minjie

The east section of the first stage of the South-to-North Water Transfer Project will go into operation in 2007 and the central section in 2010, it was announced Tuesday.

Zhang Jirao, director of the construction committee office of planning for the project said the east section will primarily bring water from the Yangtze River to Jiangsu and Shandong, while the central section will serve Beijing.

Zhang said construction of

the project is going smoothly and will be finished on or ahead of schedule. He also revealed that the investment proportion from the central government will be raised from 20 to 30 percent.

The South-to-North Water Transfer Project is the world's largest water diversion scheme, involving four major river regions in China and will take forty to fifty years to complete. The east line will cost 32 billion yuan and the central section 92 billion yuan.

## New Compensation Criteria Issued for Land Acquisition

By Sun Yongjian

The compensation ceiling for cultivated land compulsorily acquired by the state from peasants has been raised, Xinhua reported last Friday.

New regulations issued by the Ministry of Land and Resources state that if compensation provided under the current criteria is insufficient to maintain the current living standard, the local government should offer additional subsidies with a certain proportion coming from the profits of the compensated use of state-owned lands.

The current regulations state that the ceiling for compensation on compulsorily acquired cultivated land is 30 times the land compensation plus settlement allowance. However in some regions, this is not enough to maintain the peasants' current living level, while in other regions the settlement allowances are always in arrears, the Xinhua report said.

## First Mutual Insurance Company Gets Green Light

By Sun Yongjian

The China Insurance Regulatory Commission (CIRC) Monday gave approval for the establishment of a mutual agriculture insurance company, the first of its kind in China.

The company, named Sunlight Agriculture Mutual Insurance, will be based in Heilongjiang Province, north-east China, where rice production exceeds 9 billion kilograms annually.

Unlike share holding insurance companies, mutual insurer owners are also insurance buyers, according to a statement on the CIRC's website.

The mutual insurance company starts without any principle

and is not allowed to issue shares. The company is made up of association members, who contribute insurance fees to the company as the risk fund. The members are considered as the insurees, and the company implements repayments according to its regulations, the statement said.

The establishment of the mutual agriculture insurance company is in line with international conventions and will be favorable for the development of agriculture insurance business in that region to guarantee the implementation of China's rice production strategy, a CIRC news release said.

## 30 Minute Train to Tianjin

By Annie Wei

Tianjin plans to improve transport connections with Beijing, including the introduction of a 30-minute train service between the two cities by 2007, Tianjin mayor Dai Xianglong said at a meeting Sunday. The meeting was participated in by 40 large state-owned enterprises to discuss Tianjin's investment environment.

At present, the expressway between Beijing and Tianjin, which was designed for 50,000 cars daily, carries 120,000 vehicles during peak periods, and accidents resulting from over-

loading occur frequently. The average speed has fallen to 60 kilometers per hour, Dai said.

Dai also said that Tianjin would speed up construction on its section of a highway between Beijing and Shanghai, to improve traffic flow between Tianjin and other cities.

A Mr. Zhang, from the Tianjin Traffic Commission, told *Beijing Today* Monday that the investment was estimated at 12.3 billion yuan; further details, such as investment sources, related construction sites and the exact amount of investment are still awaiting approval by the State Council.





Zhang Hai (left), representing Jianlibao group, on Tuesday signed a sales contract with Li Zhida (right), chairman of Huizhongtian Investment Co. in Guangzhou.

## Two Beijing Firms

Xinhua Photo

By Sun Yongjian

Chinese soft drink maker Jianlibao Group, whose brand is so well known in this country that it can compete head-to-head with Coca-Cola, has been bought by two local companies, a source from Jianlibao told *Beijing Today* on Wednesday.

Huizhongtianheng Investment Co., an investment enterprise engaged in the pharmaceutical, daily consumption good, real estate and travel industries, took a 68 percent stake in the soft drink maker and Hengtai Science & Technology Development Co. a 20 percent stake, a statement issued by Huizhongtianheng on Tuesday said.

## Buy Jianlibao

Cheng Botao, head of the office of Jianlibao's board of directors, said the related contract had been signed by Jianlibao's Chairman Zhang Hai and General President Zhu Weisha.

Another Jianlibao insider, who requested anonymity, told *Beijing Today* Zhang and Zhu had sold their shares in Jianlibao to Huizhongtianheng, meaning they would no longer be active in the company's operations. Li Zhida, president of Hui-

zhongtianheng, would assume the top leadership spot at Jianlibao, the source said, though the company has not confirmed that move.

Li, also chairman of Raystar Daily Cosmetic Co., earned national fame in December 2003 for selling reputed domestic cosmetics brand Mininurse to France's L'Oreal, the *Beijing News* reported Wednesday.

Rumors are already flying that Jianlibao could meet a sim-

ilar fate in Li's hands.

Before the purchase, Jianlibao had been mired in a serious fiscal crisis, with production nearly stopped, employees going unpaid for nearly two months, sales plummeting and debts spiralling, the *Beijing News* said.

The newspaper added it only took one month to seal the deal, from start of negotiations to signing of the contract, because of the attractive offered price.

Huizhongtianheng has not disclosed detailed information about the deal, such as the final purchase price and how much would be invested in Jianlibao, the report said.

## China Southern Acquires Two Smaller Carriers

By Dong Xin

Domestic carrier China Southern Airlines Co. announced last Saturday it was buying China Northern Airlines and Xinjiang Airlines with assets worth over \$2 billion and assume a total of 15.1 billion yuan of debts in the latest development in the ongoing restructuring of China's fragmented airline industry.

The Chinese government ordered the consolidation of domestic airlines in late 2002, trying to bring order to a sector that had grown to hold an unruly 20 companies all competing through margin-sapping price wars. By government order, Air China, China Southern and China Eastern Airlines were made the country's main carriers through a series of mergers.

A statement on the website of the Shanghai Stock Exchange said China Southern, which is listed in Shanghai, Hong Kong and New York, would pay 897 million yuan (\$108.4 million) in cash and receive a short-term \$1 billion loan to buy China Northern Airlines and Xinjiang Airlines from its parent, China Southern Airlines Holding Co.

Through the deal, China Southern will get command of Shenyang, Liaoning Province-based China Northern Airlines' 106 domestic and 29 international routes, and the 42 domestic lines and seven international routes serviced by Urumqi, Xinjiang-based Xinjiang Airlines. Those two airlines are already using China Southern's CZ code.

The merger also expands China Southern's fleet to 214 aircraft from 139, giving it a network covering most of China and foreign cities as far as Amsterdam and Sydney.

The Shanghai Stock Exchange statement noted that the deal would also raise China Southern Airline's debt ratio to a potentially dangerous 75 percent from 69.2 percent.

The acquisition plan still needs approval at a China Southern shareholders' meeting scheduled for December 31.

## Pair of Domestic Companies Prepare to Sue Siemens

By Sun Yongjian

Chinese companies Firefly Lighting Co. and Hisense are getting ready to jointly file a lawsuit in a German court against a fully owned subsidiary of Germany-based Siemens AG and an affiliate on charges of trademark violations.

Siemens-owned Osram registered the Firefly trademark in Germany in June 2001 without providing information about the Chinese owner of the brand, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported on August 15, and a source from Firefly told *Beijing Today* four days later that Siemens' malicious intent was clear, because during a trip to Europe this May, he had found no Siemens products in the EU market carrying the Firefly trademark.

"We will file a lawsuit against Osram GMBH, a fully owned subsidiary of Sie-

mens AG in Munich because we found our Firefly trademark has been illegally stolen in that city. We have negotiated with them, but it seems that no agreement can be reached, thus, we decide to bring the matter to the court," Jia Qiang, general manager of Firefly Lighting Co., a Xiamen, Fujian Province-based maker of lighting materials, told *Beijing Today* by telephone on Tuesday.

Jia noted that Firefly had decided to go into the suit with Hisense, a state-owned appliance maker, in order to defray the potentially high legal expenses.

Hisense discovered the Hisense trademark had been registered in Germany by Bosch and Siemens Hausgerate GmbH (BSH) without expressed authorization, Hisense General Manager Guo Qing-

cun was quoted as saying in a news release in September.

"BSH registered the trademark Hisense in Germany in 1999 as one of the Hi series of trademarks it has used or many years... If the trademark Hisense was used in the European market by any other company, it would be a violation of BSH's copyright," Wang Junyan, media specialist for corporate communications at Siemens Ltd. China told *Beijing Today* in October.

Wang said both matters were the result of unfortunate coincidences.

"Siemens refuses to give any comments on these affairs. Osram GMBH is a fully owned subsidiary and BSH is an affiliate of Siemens in which both Siemens and Bosch hold equal 50 percent stakes, they have nothing to do with Siemens Ltd."



Xinhua Photo

## Local Stores Raise Gold Prices

By Annie Wei

Major gold dealers in Beijing, including Caibai Co., Beijing Gongmei Group and eight other retailers have made a collective decision to hike the price of gold to a maximum of 139 yuan per gram from 126 yuan per gram, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported on Tuesday.

The price of gold was usually adjusted by local gold associations in other provinces and department stores spontaneously increasing gold prices was not a common phenomenon in Beijing, the article said.

Wang Chunli, general manager of Caibai Co. was quoted as saying the move was made to match rising international prices and the increasing difficulty of procuring raw gold materials. Wang Jian, manager of Gongmei Group's gold department, said the company's department store had purchased 30 kilograms of bulk gold at the end of October for 113 yuan per gram, leading to only one yuan of profit per gram on finished products following taxes and processing and labor expenses.

The minimum profit margin for gold jewelry should be around three percent, he added, pointing out that mark was impossible to hit without a price rise. Even after the move, the price of gold in Beijing is still below other major Chinese cities, as it normally sells for 140 yuan per gram in Shanghai, Chengdu, Wuxi, Suzhou and other places.

## Teenager Inherits Massive Stake in Junyao Group

By Annie Wei

Teenager Wang Han, the first born son of the late CEO of Junyao Group, stands to inherit a 40 percent stake in the prominent domestic company, Junyao's listed subsidiary Dasha Gufen announced at the Shanghai Stock Exchange last Saturday.

Wang Junyao, the founder and CEO of Junyao Group, died of intestinal cancer on November 7. The Wenzhou, Fujian Province-native businessman was 38 years old. Wang had held a 50 percent stake in the group, which has an estimated 3.5 billion yuan in assets in different business in the aviation, dairy and real estate industries.

Dasha Gufen's announcement explained that junior high school student Wang Han's shares were worth 1.4 billion yuan.

Wang Junjin, Wang Junyao's younger brother, would step up as group CEO and inherit a five percent stake, bringing his personal holdings in Junyao Group to 35 percent, the company said. Junyao's remaining shares were in the hands of individual shareholder Wang Junhao, it said.

This July, Junyao Group spent almost 200 million yuan on the initial purchase of Jiangsu Wuxi Commercial Mansion Group Co., the parent company of Dasha Gufen to take over that listed company.

## Shanghai Media Group to Pioneer New English Channel

By Qiu Jiaoning

Shanghai Media Group (SMG), China's second largest broadcaster after CCTV, is preparing to launch Shanghai's first and China's second English television channel, the *Oriental Morning Paper* said last Thursday.

The group's plans call for the new channel to start broadcasting in 2005.

"The group is actively preparing to launch the channel while waiting for approval from industry regulator, the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television," SMG spokeswoman Tang Lijun was quoted as saying in Western media last week.

The channel would carry the

name Dragon International, a SMG executive who requested anonymity said, adding the group had received verbal approval from the television administration to broadcast in China. He added SMG also aimed to supply programs to the North America market to compete for viewers with CCTV-9, China's first English channel which is already widely available abroad.

SMG said the channel would follow the tested model of CNN's international channel and provide programming related to news, finance, culture and travel, language teaching, film and entertainment.

## Drug Giants Merge

By Sun Yongjian

Shanghai-based China Worldbest Group Co. and Beijing-based Beijing Pharmaceutical Group Co. announced their merger last Saturday in Beijing. The bilateral structural reorganization was undertaken to help face international competition, the companies said.

Newly formed Beijing Pharmaceutical Group will start with a registered capital of 2.32 billion yuan after the reorganization, a

press release issued on the website of China Worldbest Group said.

China Worldbest Group, one of 189 enterprises directly overseen by the State Council's State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission, and Beijing Pharmaceutical Group would hold equal 50 percent shares of the new company, the statement said, and the headquarters of China Worldbest Group would be moved from Shanghai to Beijing.

## Red Hat Establishes Local Office

By Sun Yongjian

Red Hat, the world's leading provider of open source and Linux software announced the opening of Red Hat Beijing through a news release issued on Monday.

With the new corporate presence, Red Hat would work to enable the China market to learn more about open source and how to leverage the full benefits of open source within their organizations, the news release said.

One of the new local company's first initiatives would be to support Linux and open source education though offering free Red Hat Academy programs, run in partnership with Tsinghua

University and Nanjing University, it said.

"Open source software, and particularly Linux, has a critical role to play both in advancing the development of China's rapidly growing software industry and in creating the best information infrastructure for China's globally competitive enterprises," Red Hat President and CEO Matthew Szulik was quoted as saying.

Red Hat said it would work with key industry partners such as BEA, Dell, HP, IBM, Intel and Oracle as well as Chinese business partners to serve the needs of the Chinese market.

## Founder, Intel Present Netcafe Solution

By James Liu

Founder Technology Group and Intel China jointly released their strategic solution for the development of the country's booming Internet cafe industry on Tuesday.

The solution, which uses Founder desktop computers and Intel's hyper-threading technology for increasing CPU speed and efficiency, is intended to promote the further development of netcafes since China decided to push the industry into a chain shop model within three years.

At the more than 125,000 In-

ternet cafes around the country, a mere 3.5 million of the computers are from brand-name makes. Founder said it saw great market potential when cafe owners had to replace their shabby PCs with more advanced models.

The domestic computer maker announced it would provide financial assistance for cafe owners to purchase Founder PCs. "We also encourage netcafe owners to rent our PCs specially designed for netcafe use," Yu Hao, vice general manager of Founder's sales platform told *Beijing Today* Tuesday.

## Coke to Further Build Brands in China

By Pan Hao

Coca-Cola (China) last Friday celebrated the production of its 100 billionth bottle of beverage in this country, now the American soft drink giant's fifth largest market worldwide.

Paul Etchells, president of Coca-Cola (China), was quoted as saying in a press statement that the company's goal was to further develop Coke's family of brands to meet domestic needs.

Coca-Cola had invested a total of \$1.2 billion in China, building 28 bottling companies with 34 bottling plants, including five established this year, the release said.

In order to expand its share of market, the company has started a new pricing strategy known as "one for one bottle" in some regions, in which 1 yuan is enough to purchase a Coke in a returnable glass bottle.

## Netcom Launches IPOs in New York, Hong Kong

By Sun Yongjian

China Netcom (Group) Company, one of China's six major telecommunication service providers, held its initial public offerings on the stock markets of New York on Tuesday and Hong Kong on Wednesday, making it the fourth Chinese telecom giant to list overseas after China Telecom (Hong Kong), China Unicom and China Telecom.

The company, the second largest provider of fixed telephone lines in China, issued 52.3 million shares in New York at \$21.82 per share, and

1.05 billion shares in its Hong Kong IPO priced at HK\$8.48 per share, intending to bring in a total of \$1.14 billion.

Strongly performing assets from several domestic cities and provinces were packed into China Netcom's portfolio before the listings.

Netcom's move comes as the largest IPO project in Asia's telecom market this year. US-based investment banks Goldman Sachs and Citibank and domestic bank China International Capital Corp served as underwriters for the IPO.



November 11, (FT.com) – They may still sometimes fret about the competitive threat from its abundant cheap labor, but Latin Americans are beginning to feel good about China.

Growing commercial links – highlighted by this week’s visit to Latin America by Hu Jintao, the president of China – are now more likely to be seen as benefiting a region rich in precisely the natural resources that China needs to keep growing.

China’s hunger for raw materials underpins the connection that Hu will cement by visiting Brazil, Argentina, Cuba and Chile in a two-week trip starting tomorrow.

Its economy – in spite of fears of a slowdown – is still expanding at a rate of 9.1 percent while its industrial output is expected to jump by 16.1 percent.

That growth is sucking in ever-greater quantities of raw materials and keeping prices high.

Brazil is selling vast quantities of high quality iron ore to China. Chile and Peru are selling copper and farmers across the southern cone are selling soya beans to the vast Chinese

# Latin America Dances to China Beat

market. Oil producers such as Venezuela and Mexico are benefiting from high prices that at least partly reflect Chinese demand.

## Analyst’s Take:

As everyone knows, Latin America is well endowed with natural resources. For instance, it possesses the world’s largest rainforest, huge mineral reserves and favorable conditions for agriculture. Hence, as the raw material base and primary commodity supplier, Latin America will continue to play

a significant role in the world economy. China, a resource-poor nation in per capita terms is expected to import more primary commodities from Latin America in the coming years.

Since the 1990s, trade between China and Latin America has constantly grown, reaching a record-breaking US\$26.8 billion in 2003. Chinese commodities have been exported to almost all corners of Latin America. Many countries of Latin America have taken anti-dumping measures to safeguard their domestic market.

China makes an increasing contribution to the economy of Latin America. When it looks towards Asia, Latin America has to pay attention to China, whose fast economic growth will create many opportunities for cooperation. There’s no doubt Latin America will benefit from exporting primary commodities to China.

To further Sino-Latin American relations as a model of South-South cooperation, China should facilitate political relations on the basis of developing economic relations promote understanding and urge an end to trade barriers.

The economic relationship between China and Latin America cannot be seen as on level pegging as China has developed so fast during the last 20 years. Trade between the two sides only accounts for about three percent of each side’s total foreign trade.

All in all, there are still some problems that need to be settled through constant efforts from both sides.

– Jiang Shixue, deputy director of Institute of Latin American Studies at the China Academy of Social Sciences (Qiu Jiaoning)

## Global Auto Safety Standards on Way

Virginia, November 17 (USA Today) – Auto regulators from the US and other nations will meet Thursday in Geneva to sign off on the first-ever global safety standard for vehicles.

This first standard covers door-latch safety at a time of heightened interest in preventing deaths and injuries in rollover crashes. Keeping people inside vehicles in all crashes has become a top priority of safety engineers.

The global standard will lead to stronger car door latches and require a secondary latch for sliding minivan doors and a warning if they’re open, says National Highway Traffic Safety Administration rulemaking chief Stephen Kratzke. Based on the standard, NHTSA plans to propose stricter US rules on latches within a month. The agency’s current door-latch standard is more than 30 years old and is widely viewed as weak.

The new standard is the first byproduct of a 1998 accord among 22 nations to create uniform auto-safety standards. Those nations will propose for public comment rules that mirror the global standard but can modify the rules based on their individual needs.

## German Growth to Slow to 1.4 Percent: ‘Five Wise Men’

Berlin, November 17 (AFP) – Growth of the German economy, the biggest in the 12-country eurozone, is expected to slow to just 1.4 percent next year from 1.8 percent expected this year, the government’s so-called “Five Wise Men” panel of independent economic advisors forecast.

The new updated prognosis, published Wednesday in the panel’s regular autumn report, is much slower than the official growth forecast of 1.7 percent being penciled in by the German government next year.

## American Flu Vaccine Shortage Might Continue into 2005

November 17 (USA Today) – The flu vaccine shortage might stretch into 2005 if one key US supplier cannot resume manufacturing in time.

California-based Chiron was to supply the USA with almost half its flu vaccine this flu season. Last month, its license to make the vaccine in Liverpool, England, was suspended after regulators found manufacturing problems and declared the vaccine unusable. Chiron says it is trying to fix the problem.

If it cannot, the USA will again be short Chiron’s roughly 50 million doses. Finding them elsewhere won’t be easy. There’s little excess capacity in the current global flu vaccine market. US officials are under time pressure to secure new suppliers. Flu vaccine takes months to make – production must start in the early spring so vaccine can reach consumers by October and November.

Without Chiron, “There will be shortages in the US next year,” predicts John Savopoulos, vaccine analyst for researcher Datamonitor.

Prices might rise. Illinois recently paid up to \$10 a dose for flu vaccine from Europe. That’s at least 30 percent more than some 2004 prices.

## Junk Food Ads Banned to Fight Fat Epidemic

London, November 14 (The Observer) – Junk food adverts during children’s programs will be banned and unhealthy foods issued with warning labels under a ‘traffic light’ scheme to help tackle Britain’s obesity crisis.

The moves will be the centerpiece of the government’s long-awaited report on public health, to be published on Tuesday, which will cover the nation’s slide into unhealthy habits, including eating, smoking and drinking to excess.

The move on children’s health and television follows a sustained campaign by parents angry at under-fives being bombarded by TV campaigns using cartoon characters and catchy jingles encouraging them to want unhealthy snacks.

Sugar, salt and fat-laden foods such as sweets or burgers will display red labels on their packaging to signify they should be eaten sparingly, with ‘virtuous’ foods such as vegetables marked green to encourage their consumption.

Foods such as cheese, high in fat but nutritious, will be labeled amber.

Crucially, TV watchdogs will be expected to use the new code to determine which food adverts can be shown when young children are watching.

# Kmart Buying Sears in \$11 Billion Deal



New York, November 17 (Reuters) – Discount retailer Kmart Holding Corp. will buy department store operator Sears, Roebuck & Co. in a surprise \$11 billion deal that creates the third-largest US retailer, the companies said on Wednesday.

The new company, Sears Holdings, will have about \$55 billion in annual revenue and nearly 3,500 retail stores.

The companies, both of which have been struggling, said in a joint statement the merger, expected to

be finalized by next March, was expected to generate significant cost savings but could also trigger sales of “nonstrategic” real estate assets.

The deal came as a surprise to many analysts, who were uncertain of the motives behind the merger.

“They both bring to the table diverse opportunities, but it’s not clear if they are merging to make them more able to stand up to Wal-Mart’s greater strength or if this is a real estate deal,” said Kurt Barnard, president of the Retail Consulting Group.

# Iran Wants China to Replace Japan as Top Oil Importer

Beijing, November 6 (AFP) – Iran wants China to replace Japan as its biggest importer of oil and gas, Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh was reported as saying here.

“Japan is our number one energy importer due to historical reasons ... but we would like to give preference to exports to China,” Zanganeh was quoted as saying in the China Business Weekly magazine.

“From the supply side, we have no difficulties (in making China the top energy oil importer from Iran),” the minister added.

Iran and China last week signed a preliminary accord under which China will buy 10 million tonnes a year of liquefied natural gas (LNG) for 25 years in a deal worth 100 billion dollars.

The memorandum of understanding also grants to Chinese oil giant Sinopec the right to exploit the Yadavaran oil field on a buy-back basis in cooperation with a major international oil company.

On Saturday, Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said in Tehran that Beijing opposed US efforts to refer Iran to the United Nations Security Council over its nuclear program.

“It would only make the issue more complicated and difficult to work out,” Li said during a news conference.

The United States accuses Iran

of secretly trying to develop nuclear weapons under cover of its civilian atomic energy program and wants the UN watchdog International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to take Iran before the UN Security Council when the IAEA meets in Vienna on November 25.

## Analyst’s Take:

Success always entails risks. If we don’t take the risk, we must be ready to lose the possible benefit. Iran does have the capacity to provide energy resources to China. All through the ages, friendly relations have existed between China and Iran. Thus it is not necessary for us to give up such a great source of energy resources.

With so many variables, we are not sure about whether or not Iran will become the next Iraq. However, the US has got bogged down in Iraq, and so the threat of military forces can hardly be seen in a short term. Meanwhile, we shouldn’t sit back waiting for a disaster evolved from risks, but try our best to resolve contradictions and take risks gradually.

Drawing on the good experience of the European Union, there is investment in oil in both the Caspian Sea and the Middle East, while relations between the US and the EU is not daggers drawn. In fact, the EU has played the role of mediator to reduce regional conflict as its members have realized that if only the Middle East was stable, supply of energy resources is assured.

Iran has always engaged in multi-lateral oil diplomacy. As a result, it is the presence of oil that leads some countries to counterbalance US influence. To date, Iran has successfully connected its own interest with the energy demands of the EU, Russia, Japan and India. If the big deal between China and Iran goes into effect, China will be certain to utter its own voice. In addition, China should persist in following a pluralistic line on overseas energy strategy to avoid risk.

– Liu Ming, deputy secretary-general of Center for Third World Studies at the China Academy of Social Sciences, interviewed by The Economic Observer on November 14 (Qiu Jiaoning)

# APEC Threatening to Split the Pacific?

Washington, November 14 (AFP) – APEC, set up 15 years ago to bring the Asian and American economies together, now threatens to split the Pacific axis apart, some analysts say.

The Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, whose leaders gather in Santiago for annual talks this week, also is evolving into a tripolar global trading system that some warn could wreck the multilateral trading system pursued by the World Trade Organization.

Key reasons for the concern are the proliferation of preferential trading arrangements with the Asia-Pacific region and APEC’s inability to formulate an efficient trade liberalization program.

APEC made some dramatic trade policy moves after its establishment in 1989 but over the last six years, its trade liberalization initiatives “have faltered badly,” said American economist Fred Bergsten.

Bergsten, among the “eminent persons” who helped set up APEC in 1989 to serve as an effective bridge between the two sides of the Pacific Ocean, said the APEC free-trade tools now appeared “moribund.”

APEC, whose primary goal is to achieve free trade and investments in the region by 2020, comprises developed nations such as United States, Japan, South Korea and Canada, Australia and New Zealand and developing economies such as China, Chile and those in Southeast Asia.

APEC economies have rapidly forged 40 free-trade agreements and

regional trading arrangements so far, with about 40 others still under negotiations.

In Asia, the 10 Southeast Asian nations, China, Japan, South Korea and India are setting up “building blocks” for a giant free trade area covering nearly three billion people.

Meanwhile, negotiations to formulate the Free Trade Area of the Americas, an expansion of the North American Free Trade Agreement to every country in Central America, South America and the Caribbean, except Cuba, are to be completed by 2005.

These arrangements are rapidly creating a “noodle bowl” of overlapping inconsistent and often low-quality agreements, Bergsten said.

Bergsten thinks the “only decisive way to restart the momentum of both APEC and global trade liberalization, with all its political and security as well as economic benefits, is to launch an Asia-Pacific wide free trade area.

## Analyst’s Take:

I don’t totally agree with Fred Bergsten. As far as I’m concerned, I would like to say APEC has done much good for its members since it was set up.

Firstly, from my point of view, the Asia-Pacific region needs such an organization to promote regional trade development. Secondly, to a large extent, it strengthened the economic cooperation and relationship among members. What’s more, it even included some cultural exchanges.

Bergsten considered the APEC free-trade tools as moribund right now. I think this focuses on the negative side. Why not look at the bright side? In this complicated world and under the frame of APEC, what we most need is to strengthen our financial cooperation and intercommunication, especially between China, Japan and the United States. These three countries play a leading role in this region and influence the global economic system.

– Lu Feng, Professor and Vice-director of China Center for Economic Research at Peking University (Deng Minjie)



# Report Reveals Dirty Tricks by Wet Wipe Makers

By Zhou Ying / Li Jian

An official from Beijing's Health Inspection Bureau publicly acknowledged on Tuesday that the city government does not currently have the means to keep poor quality, single use moist towelettes from appearing on tables at local restaurants.

More than 50 restaurants in Beijing, including such big names as the Da Yali and Jin Shancheng chains, have given customers low-quality disposable hand towels carrying the Ya Jiada mark, CCTV's *Weekly Quality Report* program said on Sunday.

"The makers of these towelettes send their best ones in for normal inspections and we have no way to appoint people to stand at each company every day and supervise what's happening," Cai Changjing, director of the health inspection bureau's public relations department, told the *Beijing Morning Post*.

The manager of the Ya Jiada paper production factory, who would not give his name, told CCTV that



CCTV found bloody bandages and other scrap cotton pieces are used to make some moist towelettes.

the small towels made at his factory used basic materials purchased from different processing sites in Hebei Province.

"The reason some towelettes have dark lines or other things is just because some of the base materials are of poor quality," he said.

Investigations conducted by CCTV journalists and inspectors from the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine revealed that among the base materials used to make the one-use towels was po-

tentially toxic garbage, including rags, old clothes and even bloody bandages from hospitals.

The program said scrap collectors were able to sell about 100 tons of these used cotton materials a day to factories in Hebei Province.

An employee at one factory making wet wipes said all purchased basic materials were first soaked in bleach. "After that, even the most yellow pieces of cotton come out white as snow," he said while cutting up a pair of discarded pants.

After the materials were bleached, a machine was used to turn them into rolls of cotton, the employee said. "These rolls of cotton are sold to factories making quilts or cotton clothes, and the rest goes to some weaving factories."

With the man's help, the CCTV journalists managed to track down the Huifeng weaving factory in Gaoyang village, Hebei Province. The boss of the facility told the station he had purchased some rolls of cotton from the process sites for 4,200 yuan per ton in or-

der to break them up to produce yarn that could be sold for around 10,000 yuan per ton.

That yarn was then turned into small, disposable towels in a covert facility in small village after further treatment including bleaching, washing and drying. "Workers add some chemicals that could be harmful to people, such as hydrogen peroxide, into a huge pool where the cotton cloth is bleached," CCTV reported.

The finished towels were brought into Beijing by some local paper production factories, it said.

The investigation uncovered more than 36 kinds of disposable tableware, including chopsticks and hand towels, not up to national standards. Local authorities had confiscated nearly 200 kilograms of these products and producers of the substandard goods, like Ya Jiada, would be closed for management shake-ups, CCTV said.

Cai Changjing said the only way to solve the problem was to cut off the low-quality cotton at the source.

## Suspected Supermarket Blackmailer Caught

By Wang Fang

A man suspected of blackmailing seven local supermarkets by threatening to poison their products if they did not pay him was caught by local police on Tuesday, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported.

Shuang'an Market, SOGO, Chaoyangmen Jian Hypermarket and four other department stores in Beijing had received anonymous letters since last Friday demanding payment to a certain bank savings account or the anonymous writer would inject pesticide into the stores' food products or leave poison in baggage lockers, the newspaper said.

In order to protect customers, the stores closed their supermarkets immediately upon receiving the letters.

After hearing about the cases, Beijing police set up an emergency task force to investigate the bank account and test food products on the stores' shelves for contamination.

On Monday, the police identified the holder of

the account as Yin Gang from Heilongjiang Province, *Beijing Youth Daily* said. They also found he was staying at the Guyuan Hostel near Jishuitan Hospital in Xicheng District.

When an unsuspecting Yin returned to the hotel around 10 am on Tuesday, he was quickly apprehended by waiting police. Officers found a bank card for the account in his pockets.

The owner of the hostel, surnamed Dai, told the *Beijing Times* that Yin said he had come to look after a relative in Beijing Hospital when he checked in. "He was quite silent and did not have any visitors," Dai said.

A spokesman for the Beijing Public Security Bureau said at a Tuesday press conference that Yin was also the primary suspect in the blackmailing of four supermarkets in Tianjin and Baoding, Hebei Province.

A Mr. Zheng from SOGO told the *Beijing Times* that all foods tested from the mall's supermarket proved safe and had been put back on the shelves.

## Window at McDonald's Mysteriously Broken

By Liu Zhaoxi

Employees at a McDonald's outlet in the Shunyi suburb northeast of downtown Beijing got a shock on Monday morning when they arrived to find one of the restaurant's large plate glass windows was shattered. The window was full of cracks and had a small round hole in it, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported on Tuesday.

Area security guards said they had seen nothing out of the ordinary when they closed on Sunday night and the shattered window, presumably a result of vandalism, was discovered around 3 am Monday morning, the newspaper said. A worker hired to fix the window guessed it had been shot with an air gun, it said.



Picking up the pieces

Photo by Liu Wang Xiaoxi

No injuries have been reported in the case.

A source from McDonald's local branch company told *Beijing Today* that local police had been informed and started an investigation, but the source would not confirm if the window had been shot.

## Court Convicts Sun Yat-sen Imposter

By Zhou Ying

The Beijing Chaoyang Court on Monday found Zhu Yongcheng, 62, guilty of defrauding four victims of 554,000 yuan by claiming to be none other than Sun Yat-sen (Sun Zhongshan), father of the Chinese Republic who died in 1925.

Zhu, a Shaanxi Province native, told the court he and accomplice Wang Yuying, 67, who posed as his secretary, came to Beijing three years ago and cooked up their scheme to con gullible people of money by posing as Sun, who would be 138 years old.

Their first plan was for Zhu to say he was Chiang Kai-shek, but they quickly reassessed after finding the former KMT leader was widely reviled in this country. "Then I changed my idea to be Chairman Mao, but I feared if I was found, I would be sentenced to death. So we settled on Sun Yat-sen," Zhu testified.

He explained that he told his victims that as Sun, he had only pretended to die in 1925, noting that some believed him despite the fact he looked nothing like the former Chinese leader.

In the scams, the fake Sun claimed he had come to Beijing to dig out a fortune in jewels he had stashed in a mountain outside the city decades before and wanted



Zhu Yongcheng

Photo by Liu Wenzhi

to withdraw a vast sum of funds frozen in personal bank accounts to put towards national causes.

"I told them I needed capital to start the plan and promised to repay any loans at high rates of interest," Zhu said. The public prosecutor presented stamps, documents and a commander's sword confiscated from Zhu's apartment. "I showed these to people to make them believe I was Sun. All of them, of course, are fake," Zhu confessed.

Investigations by Beijing authorities uncovered the biggest single victim of Zhu's con, a monk hoping to repair his temple, was cheated of 280,000 yuan. Three of the four victims were over 80 years old and gave Zhu money they borrowed from others.

The court said it would announce Zhu's sentence next week.

## Gallery Paints Picture of Schools for Migrant Workers' Kids

By Liu Zhaoxi

Since its establishment a decade ago, the Haidian Xingzhi Experimental School, an elementary school for children of migrant workers in Beijing, has moved several times and is expected to do so again soon, since its current location is in a reconstruction zone.

The school, founded and run by migrant workers, has no fixed facilities and has to rent classrooms and other space.

The saga of the school's survival is just one of the remarkable stories depicted in the Education of Children of Migrant Workers exhibition that opened at the Today Gallery last Saturday and runs through Sunday. Through hundreds of photos and real items such as worn-out tables painted many colors, the show is intended to depict the states of Beijing's brave migrant worker-founded schools and their students.

"We want people come to take a look at these kids of migrant workers, who live here with us in the same city. One day, they will also be the builders of the city," Zhang Chuanyuan, an official from the China Youth Development Foundation, the main sponsor of the exhibition, told *Beijing Today* on Monday.

Many of the millions of rural flooding cities around China for work bring along their children, lots of whom cannot enroll in city schools due to financial difficulties and policy restrictions. As a result, enterprising migrants began setting up their own schools to ensure their children would get educations.

The first such school in Beijing opened in 1993. Though initially considered unqualified and not given accreditation for their poor conditions, local migrant schools have been getting recognition and backing from the municipal government in recent years. More than 280,000 children of migrant workers are currently enrolled in Beijing schools, around 70 percent of whom are in public schools and the others in more than 300 migrant-worker founded schools, according to the Xinhua News Agency.



## French Mayor Dons Chef Hat to Help Pandas

By Zhou Ying

The mayor of the small French town of Espelette has laid aside his duties to serve as a chef, serving authentic, homestyle French fare to diners at an upscale hotel in

Chengdu, Sichuan Province through next week.

Mayor Andre Darraidou arrived in Chengdu last Saturday to start his ten-day charity cooking stint at the Sofitel Wanda Chengdu hotel.

## First Female Guard Set to Protect School

By Liu Zhaoxi

The first special security guard to patrol a local kindergarten will start work at a private school in Chaoyang District at the end of this month. Zhu Liping, 26, an former female police SWAT officer signed a contract with the Sunflower Art Kindergarten on Tuesday.

Zhu would be responsible for checking out suspicious people near the school, evacuating children in cases of emergencies and using her martial arts skills to fend off any possible threats to the young students, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported on Wednesday.

Many schools have been rushing to increase security in the wake of several violent incidents at kindergartens in Beijing and elsewhere this year.



Former SWAT officer Zhu Liping starts duty at the end of the month.

Photo by Jia Ting

## One Boy Dies, One Injured Trying to Hitch Ride in Plane's Lading Gear

By Dong Nan

A 14-year-old boy, Shu Qing, attempting to stowaway in an airplane's landing gear was killed last Friday when he fell during takeoff. His friend, who managed to live through the hour-long trip, was hospitalized shortly after the plane landed.

Survivor Liang Panlong, 13, was found nearly frozen, clinging to a hose inside the wheel well of the Sichuan Airlines Airbus 320 jet, outbound from Kunming, Yunnan Province, when the plane landed at its destination of Chongqing Thursday morning.

The next day, doctors said Liang was in stable, fair condition, despite exposure to temperatures as low as 22 below zero Centigrade, oxygen-thin air and extreme engine noise.

"I was not afraid, but I felt very sad after Shu Qing fell down, since we had only known each other several days," Liang told Xinhua on Tuesday. "Only after I was found did I feel afraid."

Liang said he and Shu were both runaways under the care of a Kunming shelter. They managed to escape in October and headed to the city's airport.

After sneaking through a damaged iron fence at the airport's north end and into the parking apron, they climbed into the parked plane's wheel well as a stunt, the young boy from Nanchong, Sichuan Province said.

To their great surprise, the plane started taxiing out and took off several minutes later. Liang said he managed to grab onto a hose, but Shu could not get a grip on anything and plunged out of the plane.

Afterwards, Liang managed to crawl deeper into the plane's undercarriage, where he stayed until he was discovered in Chongqing.

Liang claimed his parents divorced and had beaten him repeatedly in the past. Later that day, those claims were publicly refuted by his parents, Liang Kaishheng and Zuo Jun, who as of Thursday had not gone to Kunming to collect their son.

Kunming Airport vice president Wang Jinsheng told the media over the weekend that the airport accepted responsibility in the case for not conducting safety checks before the plane took off that would have quickly revealed the boys' presences. Wang said the airport had repaired the damaged iron fence they slipped through and would make November 11 an annual day of remembrance of the tragedy.

On Monday, Shu Qing's mother, Xia Huifen, went to the Kunming Airport and asked for 200,000 yuan in compensation. But the airport did not agree to that figure and said that as Shu's legal guardian, Xia should also shoulder some responsibility. As of Thursday, the two sides had not reached an agreement.



By Liu Zhaoxi

A new plan for Beijing's development over the next 16 years drew more than 26,000 people to an exhibition last week in the Beijing Municipal Planning Exhibition Hall. The plan sets a goal of Beijing playing four vital roles by the year 2020: national capital, international metropolis, renowned historical cultural site and livable city.

It is the first time that being a "livable city", generally defined as a good place for people to live, has been marked as an official municipal objective.

To realize that aim, the new Beijing development plan calls for many changes to be made to the city's layout, infrastructure and growth pattern.

The first front of those changes will be changing the overall layout of Beijing, from a city with a downtown center surrounded by several rings of development, to a metropolis with multiple urban centers and new towns on its outskirts to relieve pressure on downtown areas. Each new city center would have a different function, such as Zhongguangcun would be the high-tech core, Shijingshan a base for comprehensive services and Yizhuang a focal point for development of high tech industries, the Xinhua News Agency reported.

# How Can Beijing Be Made More 'Livable'?

The plan also calls for Beijing's total population to be controlled to around 18 million by 2020, the majority of whom will live in suburban areas instead of the old city center. A water-recycling system will be installed to process over 90 percent of the capital's waste water, and greenification goals of 40 to 45 square meters of green land per person and 55 percent tree coverage have been set.

To solve the city's worsening traffic problems, the downtown public transportation system, especially subways and light rails, would be greatly expanded, the overseas edition of *People's Daily* said.

So what do local people think about this new plan and the "livable city" goal? Opinions follow:

**Yuan Xin**, director of Urban Planning Institute at Tsinghua University, 'Livable city' is a vague concept

The 'livable city' concept is not very clear-cut, it is more of a goal. The concept has been known in the West for a long time but received attention in China only recently. In the past, we have stressed the production function of cities but do not pay much attention to their inhabiting function. Such neglect is partly accountable for problems like bad traffic and deteriorating environments in cities today. Generally speaking, the 'livable city' goal is concerned with such elements as air quality, noise control, traffic improvement, population size, job opportunities and crime rate.

Compared to large cities in Western countries, cities in China usually have greater population densities, making it more difficult for these cities to become 'livable'. For example, Beijing's high population density makes it impossible to take the shape of New York, where high buildings are concentrated in the downtown area and the city then spreads out in all directions.

**Qiu Feng**, netizen, The role of 'livable city' conflicts with other planned functions

What kind of city is 'livable'? According to common sense, it could be defined as a city that matches human needs and is friendly to residents, who would not feel strange or stressed in the city. But pushing Beijing's roles as a national capital and international metropolis could trump its role as a livable city.



Photo by Photocom



Beijing of the future: two main growth belts and multiple urban centers

In order to expand roadways to build a modern international metropolis, trees lining old roads have to be cut. To make roads straight, many old buildings standing in the way have to be demolished. Consequently, wide roads take the place of established structures in older parts of the city, turning residents into strangers in their own hometown.

(From *Southern Metropolitan Daily*) **Ding Jian**, Beijing citizen, Adjusting the arrangement of industries and distributing population are key issues

Whether or not the general plan will work depends first of all on the adjustment of the arrangement of local industries. Theoretically, secondary industries should be moved out of the downtown area to new towns, which would lead many people to make similar moves. That way, Beijing could have three main economic areas. The downtown area would be the center of the service sector; new suburban towns the hub of secondary industry and the countryside the agricultural core.

The realization of this plan also re-

lies on population distribution. Population shifts should not be done by official orders or public persuasion campaigns, but through new policies for opening new towns offering beautiful environments, convenient transportation, access to commercial areas and sound public facilities. (From *The Beijing News*)

**Falk Kagelmacher**, consultant for China Academy of Urban Planning and Design, Beijing is a livable city in some ways

A livable city has to offer me the environment to fulfill my personal and spiritual needs, such as cultural, entertainment and sports events, as well as my professional needs, offering opportunities to freely create something and follow my professional ideas. In terms of professional growth, I think Beijing is a livable city, but for personal and private matters, I have to make compromises. A big problem is the environment. A livable city must have a livable environment, which means breathable air and some places for relaxation.

Beijing should not forget the little people. People on bicycles have the same value as people in big cars. And for such a big city, Beijing does not have sufficient public transportation.

As an urban designer and architect, I would say we should not forget about urban feeling. Beijing should think about its history and try to preserve it, otherwise this city will look like any other city of the world.

**Liu Haibo**, licensed accountant, Shanghai is more livable than Beijing

The weather in Beijing is too dry and makes me uncomfortable. Traffic is a big problem for Beijing and I think the situation is better in Shanghai. The roads in Shanghai are not as broad as those in Beijing, but there are fewer traffic jams. Maybe Beijing should set some limitations on private car purchasing.

Beijing also has less parks than Shanghai, where many buildings were torn down to give way to open spaces. Now that Beijing is planning to spread to its outskirts to create 'Greater Beijing', I think it is very important to better protect the environment as development continues, especially considering that deserts are already encroaching on city limits.

**Zhang Shizhen**, private businesswoman, Beijing is OK

The environment of Beijing is OK and I'd say the city is clean. But the air quality is not good compared to my village hometown in Anhui Province. I don't like the city very much because people here are too complicated, but I can earn more in Beijing and my kid can get a better education.

## What's Behind the Craze for Civil Service Posts?

By Zhou Ying

When many people in China think of civil service, a life of public servitude is not what immediately comes to mind – most conjure images of high salaries, good perks and stable work conditions, main reasons why government positions are popular among job seekers nationwide.

Over 540,000 people filed applications in this year's recruiting for central government posts, setting a new national record. Of them, 310,000 were deemed qualified to sit for required exams in the hunt to fill 8,400 vacancies in more than 100 departments, according to early November statistics from the Ministry of Personnel. Competition is sure to be fierce with nearly 37 people vying for each position.

Yet 400 government jobs up for grabs this year were removed from the search list because they did not receive enough applicants. Regulations stipulate that the number of test takers must be three times the number of open positions, and with the meager response to these positions, some exams ended up being cancelled.

Among the fields all but ignored by this year's crop of job hopefuls were meteorology, earthquake monitoring and response, and mining, while potentially better-paying sectors like customs, law, sanitation and finance drew hordes of applicants.

The imbalance in this year's civil servants examination may reflect some larger problems in the government recruitment system and the role of civil servants in society. But what problems exactly? And can they be solved?

**Jiang Ying**, college English teacher at Yantai University, Civil servants' salaries rise every year, and that attracts many graduates like me.

I participated in the examination last year just after graduating university, but I didn't pass.

The main reason why I wanted to be a civil servant then was because I could be a registered permanent resident of Beijing. Otherwise, it can be very difficult for people like me from other cities to find jobs in Beijing.

Secondly, I have heard that civil servants' salaries rise every year, and that attracts many graduates, like me. Most recent graduates would be more than satisfied with the 2,800 yuan average monthly salary paid to new civil servants. Plus, if you have one of those positions, you also get other benefits in terms of medical care, education of your children and housing.

While most civil servants get decent salaries, things of course differ between different departments. That led me to apply for the customs department last year. I think most people would agree that if you're going to go after a job, you should go after the best one available.

**Mr. Xu**, employee at a computer company who took the civil service exam this year, More and more people think of civil servant positions as ideal jobs.

As far as I know, more than 30 percent of the people who took part in the exams this year were like me, they already had jobs. That number indicates that more and more people think of civil servant positions as ideal jobs. I, for one, wanted to change my post to make my career

more stable.

One of my former colleagues has become a civil servant, and I have been really impressed by his good salary and comfortable work conditions. Since I'm getting older, working as a civil servant seems like my best choice.

However, I want to advise anyone hoping for these jobs because that's the trend to make sure they are suitable for the job. You should carefully consider other aspects of civil service – one of my friends found a government position so boring that she recently quit her nice, stable job.

**Yu Ping**, newspaper columnist, This craze... reflects the fact that power and responsibility are not properly balanced.

I think many people chasing these positions do not really know what they want – they just join in the competition out of vanity.

This craze, with masses of people rushing to enter authoritative departments, is abnormal. It reflects the fact that power and responsibility are not properly balanced.

Modern public administration concepts hold that authority should be a heavy mental burden. Therefore, as a national civil servant, the greater your power, the greater your responsibility should be and the greater your burden.

It is evident that some powerful government departments are closely related to the interests of the public and undertake complicated public service functions. In such cases, power would certainly be a heavy burden of real responsibility, not a source of pleasure and personal profit.

**Yao Yuqun**, professor at the School of Labor Relations and Human Resources at Renmin University, Differences in payment between civil servants are determined by how much grey income they get.

The concept of the civil service system came to being around 20 years ago and the civil service exam was only started 10 years ago, so I would say the whole system is still under construction.

Today, the transformation of the government's functions has made the situation less stable. Some related departments have been merged and the number of government ministries and commissions has been halved. Many changes within departments and systems or to policies have yet to be finalized.

It is true that people in some government departments get higher salaries and more benefits than their colleagues in other departments. For example, civil servants some departments related to economics or housing can get opportunities to study abroad while still receiving salary, or they may receive sizeable payments for attending opening ceremonies or other such activities.

All income outside of salary payments is called 'grey income', and most of the differences in payments between civil servants are determined by how much grey income they get.

Now the government has launched the so-called 'Sunshine Project', which sets very transparent, attractive salaries for people in different positions. The idea is the high payments will keep civil servants from trying to get grey income. However, it will take time to see whether the project proves effective.



Over 540,000 people applied for government positions in nationwide recruiting this year.

Photo by Photocom





In April 2004, people gathered before the Ministry of Land and Resources to complain

Photo by Photocom

# Why

## Popular Complaints Fall on Deaf Ears

By Dong Nan

The “*xinfang*” or “*shangfang*” (letters and complaints) system is unique to China. The director of the State Letters and Complaints Bureau says that since 1993, the workload has kept increasing, hitting a total of 10 million mis-sives in 2003.

Every year, more and more people write letters to higher authorities or go to Beijing to visit the central department to complain about unfair treatment from local officials, or unfair law-suits. They hope those depart-ments can directly solve their problem.

What has caused the up-surge? Now Chinese Academy of Social Sciences research on the issue demands the attention of higher authorities. The report states the system is in urgent need of overhaul.

### History and status

The letter and complaint sys-tem can be divided into three his-torical phases: 1951-1979, where the main purpose was solving practical problems; 1979-1982, where the main purpose was clearing up the human chaos left behind by the Cultural Revolution; and 1982 to present, where the main func-tion has become to provide relief to people whose rights have been harmed by local authority abuse and arbitrate in disputes.

From the State Council to town governments, through peo-ple’s congresses, party com-mittees, courts and people’s procuratorates: all boast special departments exclusively cater-ing to letters and complaints.

The two best known are the Office of Letters and Complaints and the Reception Center of People’s Complaints, both locat-ed in Yongdingmen Xijie, south Beijing.

Liu Jinyuan, of Dalian, Liaoning Province began her road to Beijing in 2001, when her son at work in a local auto repair shop was hit by a car and lost his legs. The local court ruled the accident was not the driver’s error. Liu felt the judge was unfair.

First, she went to the Letters and Complaints Office ran by Da-lian People’s Congress. The office asked her to go to the letters and complaints office run by the local court. The court office asked her to go to the congress office. Then the congress office asked her to go to the court office...finally she went to the Letters and Com-plaints Office of Liaoning Prov-ince Court in 2003.

Officials listened to her com-plaints and agreed the judgment seemed unfair. Their solution? Re-turn to the original court in Dalian and ask it to rejudge the case.

The Dalian court refused to rejudge the case, but asked the driver to send the family 10,000

### Why complain?

Reasons	Yes	No	Did not answer
To draw attention and solve my problems directly	69.2	25.3	5.5
Maybe the central govern-ment will release a document to solve similar problems, although mine will not be solved directly	81.2	13.2	5.6
To let the central government know the situation	90.5	5.8	3.7
To be responsible to people who support me	65.9	28.8	5.3
Pressurize the local authority	88.5	7.3	4.2

### What kind of complaint?

Problems	Percentage
Corruption of local officials	84.5
Local government retaliation for complaint to higher authority	56.2
Unlawful charge	71.5
Unreasonable tax and money collecting	69.6
Cheating in elections of village committees	67.5
Land requisition	73.2

### Did you suffer retaliation?(by percentage)

	Yes	No	Did not answer
Fine	38.8	54.9	6.3
House destroyed	34.9	58.5	6.6
Possessions confiscated	55.4	39.2	5.4
Forced to “study” by local officials	12.3	79.3	8.4
Beaten by local officials	50.2	44.5	5.1
Paraded through streets	6.9	88.3	4.8
Unlawfully imprisoned	50.4	44.9	4.7
Sentenced guilty	19.2	76.4	4.4
Framed in subsequent case by local officials	72.5	20.8	6.7
Family members beaten by local officials	40.2	53.6	6.2

yuan. Liu came to Beijing this October and sent her materials to the Office of Letters and Com-plaints, run by the National Peo-ple’s Congress.

After three days’ wait, the of-fice gave her a piece of paper, a pass to the office run by the Su-preme People’s Court...

Research group leader Yu Ji-anrong, a professor of the Rural Development Institute, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, says every year, only 0.2 percent of complaints are solved. But most people who complain still believe they can be the lucky ones.

### Reasons and results

Why are complaints never solved? For one thing, most com-plaints are too complicated to be solved by a single depart-ment. For another, the letter and complaints offices don’t have the necessary power to resolve prob-lems in any case. But the biggest reason? Bureaucracy, says Yu.

Try reading this out aloud without catching your breath: to name but a few, there’s the State Letters and Complaints Bureau, the National People’s Congress, the Supreme People’s Court, the

Supreme People’s Procuratorate, the Ministry of Public Security, the Ministry of Land and Resourc-es, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Civil Affairs.

Too many organizations, too little information-sharing and lit-tle cooperation. Complaints de-partments at state level cannot over-rule the local offices. Respon-sibility has become so fragment-ed, it’s quite normal and natural to pass the buck. Of 632 peasants who complained in Beijing, Yu found they each had complained on average to six departments each. One had visited 18.

Then there’s something Yu called “complaints syndrome.” Peasant complaints form the bulk of a workload which should be in the courts. Typically, the peasant might represent an en-tire village. Problems are com-plex. In his survey, complaints mainly focused on:

- corruption of local officials
- local government retalia-tion on people who had com-plainined to higher authorities
- unlawful charges
- unreasonable tax and mon-ey collecting

- cheating in village commit-tee elections, and,
- land requisition problems.

When those offices let them down again and again, people lose faith not only in the office, but also the entire government. This piles pressure on to the letter and complaints office to find answers. The consequenc-es can be grave indeed. More than a half of those disappoint-ed threatened to “do something to scare those officials”.

### Why still complain?

But why there are still so many people still seeking to com-plain, and who should be respon-sible for them?

The letters and complaints system, Yu suggests, belongs to a bygone age. People tend to quick-ly abandon unsuccessful judi-cial solutions in favor of much more unsuccessful complaints. The staggering inefficiency and corruption of China’s judicial network does not lend itself eas-ily to confidence.

Yu’s survey found 63.4 per-cent of his 632 peasants had already been to local courts. But 42.9 percent had their case tossed out by the court. And 54.9 percent believed the inefficiency and corruption of courts made them lose the suit. A final 2.2 percent had actually won their cases only to find the judgment unenforced.

The popular approach to in-justice remains deeply rooted in Chinese culture by placing faith in honest and upright officials over courts to solve problems, said Yu. About 90 percent of peo-ple complain mainly to “let the central government know what happened,” and “pressure the lo-cal government.”

“I think officials in Beijing are much better than my hometown’s. As long as they know things, I have hope,” said Liu Guizhen, a petitioner from Hunan Province. She says her land was requisitioned by the local village committee without compensation. She saw on TV that problems like this might be solved by central government and came to Beijing last year.

“What we need most is a ma-ture judicial system, not just so-called ‘honest and upright of-ficials,’” said Yu.

Not surprisingly, Yu advo-cates removing several layers of ailing complaints bureaucracy. “But more importantly, we need to improve the legal as-sistance system, which should be the starting point for people seeking help. Trying to fix the letters and complaints system simply isn’t the best solution.”

(Survey by Rural Develop-ment Institute research group, Chinese Academy of Social Sci-ences, led by Yu Jianrong; based on 20,000 complaints and a sur-vey of 632 peasants complaining in Beijing.)

“In the 18-35 age group, men scored two points higher than women on honesty.”

## New Test Reveals Insights into Chinese Identity

Beijing boffin uncovers variety of unique personality traits

By Wang Fang

The first indigenized Chi-nese personality assess-ment inventory (CPAI) has been worked out by a group of Chinese psychologists from the Chinese mainland and Hong Kong. The statistics show six interesting features of the Chinese personality.

### What is ‘indigenized’?

Dr Zhang Jianxin, research-er at the Institute of Psychology, Chinese Academy of Sciences and also one of the psycholo-gists worked on the inventory told *Beijing Science Daily* that the measures they took in the survey had taken full account of Chinese culture.

According to Zhang, many psychologists in China are re-lied on translated personality assessment inventories import-ed from the West. However, due to cultural differences, it didn’t accurately demonstrate the par-ticipants’ personality.

“For example, a popular translated inventory used in China has the story from *Alice in Wonderland* to test partici-pants’ personalities. However, as I know, not every Chinese is familiar with the stories in the book,” he told the Evening News Talk on CCTV 1 “the test result cannot achieve the desired goal.”

He told *Beijing Science Dai-ly* that the working group in-troduced Chinese philosophy and literature into the inven-tory to suit the participants. For example, in the test, “Al-Q mentality” is tested with a Lu Xun novel. An Al-Q mentality measures a person’s defensiveness to ill treatment. The re-sults were as follows:

1. Men have better leader-ship ability than women, while women can better control their emotions

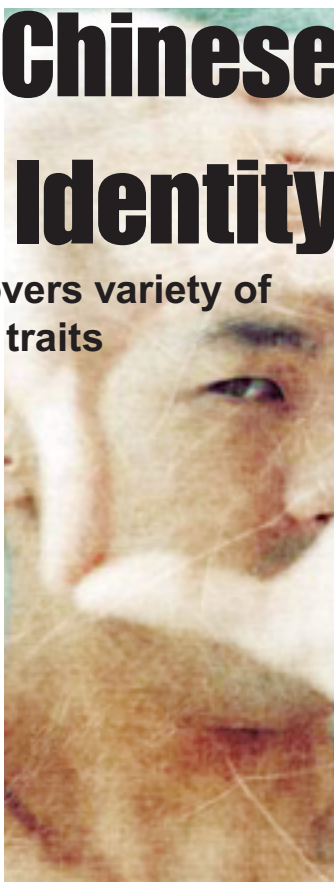
The results earned by men answering novelty, diversity, di-vergent thinking, logical and en-terprise questions scored at least two points higher than women. That makes men more optimistic and extrovert than women. The test scores for women on emo-tionality questions came in 2.1 points higher than men, which suggests women more easily get worried or depressed.

2. Elders more responsible than young people

These results suggested much wisdom in the old Chi-nese saying, “a man too young to grow a beard is not respon-sible”. People 18-25 scored 53.1 while people aged 56-70 scored 46.3 in the novelty questions. Similar differences emerged between young people and el-ders in diverse and divergent thinking. The 56-70 age group earned the highest score of five age groups for responsibility, showing that they would like to spend more time on family relationships. At the opposite end, the youngest age group, 18-25, gets the highest score for leadership.

3. Young men more honest than young women

In the 18-35 age group, men scored two points higher than women on honesty. There was no big difference between the sexes in the eldest age group of



56-70, but the score for hones-ty in this group was 6.7 points higher than for the young

4. Hong Kong citizens more down-to-earth than mainland Chinese

Hong Kong citizens scored 51.9 points in practical-mind-edness, 2.1 points higher than the average score earned by mainland Chinese from six re-gions. This was the only area for which Hong Kong citizens scored any significant differ-ence from mainland Chinese.

5. 26-35 year olds care most about family

People aged from 26-35 paid more attention to their fami-lies, at least two points higher than other groups.

6. Guangzhou citizens more psychologically healthy than Xi’an citizens

Guangzhou citizens came in 2.1 points higher than Xi’an citi-zens, suggesting Guangzhou cit-izens are better prepared for challenges from society.

### Sample

The sample of 1,911 par-ticipants aged 18-70 from six main regions in mainland China, Hong Kong (336 Hong Kongers). In Chinese mainland, quota sampling was used due to the large population sizes of house-holds in North China, North-east China, East China, Central South China, Southwest China and Northwest China. The min-imum education level was pri-mary six to ensure the reading ability required for paper-and-pencil tests. The samples were divided into six age groups: (1) from 18-25 years old, (2) 26-35, (3) 36-45, (4) 46-55, (5) 56-70 and (6) unknown.

### Chinese vs Western personal-ity

Zhang told the *Beijing Sci-ence Daily* that the test identified some unique Chinese personality traits. “One particular one is that Chinese pay attention to face,” he said. “Say a group of friends are about to go to the restaurant. In the United States, people will say whether they will go dutch or someone will treat the others be-fore they sit at the table. While Chinese do not like this. They feel it is losing face to say ev-erything clear before the dinner. Then after dinner, you will see they strive hard to be the first to pay the bill.”

“We are hoping to provide an indigenous personality assess-ment inventory,” Zhang said in the Evening News Talk pro-gramme. “Therefore, we can measure the Chinese personal-ity in a quite objective and even a quantitative way.”



By Wang Fang

Botox injection, a cosmetic treatment for reducing wrinkles, is a fashionable practice in the United States. But since its key ingredient, botulinum toxin, is the most poisonous substance known to mankind, the practice has stirred strong disagreement between medical and cosmetic professionals.

In China, botulinum toxin is listed as one of the most dangerous chemicals by the State Drugs Administration (SDA) and there is only one authorized state institute which can manufacture it. It is only allowed to be used in orthopaedic departments in select hospitals.

But investigations carried out by Beijing TV, *Beijing Science Daily* and *Southern Weekend* have uncovered private beauty parlors in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou using this injection, although they

# Botox Out of Control

Beauty parlors run riot over regulations with anti-wrinkle injections

have replaced the name Botox with "biological substance".

Anarchic use of the toxin has aroused attention from Chinese medical experts. They worry that chaotic management of the toxin threatens public health as "a single gram can kill more than 1 million people", according to Huang Cuifen, academician of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

**Unregulated toxin**  
Professor Wang Yinchun of Lanzhou Biological Products In-

stitute, the only authorized producer of botulinum toxin in China, told *Beijing Today* that governing of the toxin on the national market is out of control.

"We only sell the toxin to the buyer who has a doctor's certificate, a licence of a medical institution and a licence for selling dangerous drugs," he said. "What's more, the buyer with all three of these documents can buy only 20 vials — or about 1,000 units — equivalent to one 20 millionth of a gram. We

never supplied the toxin to any beauty parlors."

Wang alleged the toxin used by beauty parlors came from a few pharmaceutical factories which illegally produce the toxin. When *Beijing Today* typed "wrinkle reduction injection" in Chinese into the Google search engine, it showed that at least five pharmaceutical companies also sell this toxin, such as Shanghai Luxin Biological Science Company.

The smuggled toxin was another source for the injection used in the beauty parlors. According to the *Guangzhou Daily*, the packaging of

the toxin found in the beauty parlors does not have the name of the producer, let alone the State authorized number. On some packaging, the introduction is written in Russian and Korean.

In October, Lanzhou Biological Products Institute checked the toxin sold on the Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou markets. Some Botox injections claiming 55 units actually contained from 30 to 70 units.

Xie Guilin, director of the Lanzhou Biological Products Institute, told *Beijing Today* that the State should issue stringent regulations governing the purchasing of botulinum toxin. But the response from the pharmaceutical regulation office of the State Drugs Administration was that they are "unable to deal with every tiny case."

Medical researchers and experts pointed out that the potential threat of unregulated toxins was lethal as long as the State remains not ready to act.

## Not toxic

Botox injection is frequently seen in colorful beauty magazines and newspapers. But it is always advertised as "biological wrinkle-reduction injection".

Miss Zhang, who declined to be fully named, is a beautician at Jing Li Beauty Parlor in Xidan, a posh shopping center in Beijing. It took her about an hour to admit to *Beijing Today* that the white powder in the vial was Botox. "Normally, I don't tell customers that it is Botox because they don't trust that a toxin can be safe," she said.

Asked where she obtained the Botox, she kept silent. She stressed all her beauticians were trained and experienced. "We have about 10 customers every day," she said.

But the survey conducted by *Beijing Today* showed that in Beijing, only the Union Hospital has such experts. Doctor Wang

Xiaopei said on the phone that she went abroad to learn it and she has practiced for three years. "A little mistake during the injection will cause patients harm, such as eyelid drooping, double vision and decreased blinking," she said.

**'Don't worry'**  
The American Orthopaedic Association found in 2000 that more than 19.1 percent of orthopaedic operations are Botox injections, with breast implants at just 3.5 percent.

Many cosmetic professionals do not worry about the use of Botox injection. Director Wang Jigeng of Beijing Yasi Medical Beauty Parlor told *Workers Daily*, "Whenever people mention the words 'bacillus' or 'toxin', they think of death. But this is not necessary because so many vaccines are weakened or killed pathogens."

Professor Yu Duanyao, the deputy of Cosmetic Guild, All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce, told *Southern Weekend* that although botulinum toxin type A is lethal, the amount used for Botox injection is little. "An injection of 2,000 units of botulinum toxin type A is lethal. But cosmetic use is only 25-50 units."

Yu told *Southern Weekend* it is more important to teach beauticians about proper Botox injection procedures, especially when so many parlors already do the injection. "If the beauticians are trained well, the injection is not dangerous."

## 'Bioweapon'

Obviously, medical experts have other ideas. When Professor Huang Cuifen heard Botox was illegally used in beauty parlors, her first response was that "easy access to the toxin could be manipulated by terrorists to produce bioweapons."

In the paper "Botulinum Toxin as a Biological Weapon" published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 18 pharmaceutical professionals from health



Botox powder Photo by Photocome

organizations in the United States state that "terrorists have already attempted to use botulinum toxin as a bioweapon". Between 1990-1995, aerosols of the botulinum toxin type A were dispersed at multiple sites in Japan on at least three occasions by the Japanese cult Aum Shinrikyo.

Shi Yuhun, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Shanghai Life Science Institute, told *Southern Weekend* that botulinum toxin might well be the first choice of terrorists. "The cost of producing botulinum toxin is quite low."

The unchecked flow of botulinum toxin onto the local market must be stopped immediately, he warned.

## Solutions

Professor Yu Duanyao said if the State Drugs Administration approved use of Botox injections in cosmetics, the chaotic situation would be resolved. "The beauty parlors will try to get the Botox

injection by every means no matter whether the State allows it or not. If so, why not allow it since it has proved safe in the United States. Meanwhile, why not issue strict regulations governing the practice?" he asked.

"At the very beginning, I did not agree with toxins in the cosmetic industry," Wang Yinchun from Lanzhou Biological Products Institute told *Southern Weekend*. "However, now I think the State should issue guidance on using Botox injections in beauty parlors and on where to buy legal injections, how to inject and how to recycle the waste vials."

In October, 2004, the Chinese Medical Association issued "Guidelines for Beauty Specialists" which described Botox injections in detail.

In the meantime, Professor Yu Duanyao told *Southern Weekend* he advised customers go to hospitals with experienced doctors to receive injections.

## Botox: Fast Facts

Botulinum toxin type A: The Encyclopedia Britannica reports "once the toxins have entered the body, they interfere with the transmission of nerve impulses, causing disturbances in vision, speech, and swallowing, and ultimately paralysis of the respiratory muscles, leading to suffocation."

Botox injection: Canadian ophthalmologist Joan Caruthers at the University of British Columbia in 1986, found the wrinkles of her patients disappeared when she injected botulinum toxin type A to treat their eye blepharospasm.

She discovered the injection prevented the release of acetylcholine and thereby prevented contraction of the muscle cells.

Final caution: Although Botox injections were approved by the US Food and Drug Administration in December 1989, customers still require a prescription to obtain it.

By Dong Nan / Yan Liang

In dark narrow underground factories in Kangle Village, Guangzhou, hundreds of children work all day and all night. They are paid once a year, cannot afford new clothes, often starve or suffer from disease.

A *Nanfang Daily* reporter investigated the village secretly for half of a year and found the truth.

## Cheap Overheads

Kangle Village, Haizhu District of Guangzhou lies in the most flourishing area of the city. Almost all the factories here manufacture clothing. Factories are mostly on the first and second floor of the building, an area of 8-40 square meters. More than 90 percent are illegal.

The Yichun factory mainly deals with sewing beads on clothes. In August, there were 13 child laborers there. Now there are 12, as one girl just celebrated her 16th birthday on September 28.

Many child workers suffer from skin rashes and blisters. The fabrics with which they work has only just dried and remains pungent from the dying process.

The 27-year-old boss of Yichun, Yang Hanhong, hails from Huahu Town, Huilai in Guangdong Province. Many of the children were enlisted from his hometown. The bead sewing business costs him almost nothing. All a worker needs is two instruments: scissors and a needle. To start up this business, Yang only need pay for housing and establish a relationship with garment factory bosses who allow him to supply them with beads.

But bead sewing is very difficult. A video store manager who had recently done this work told *Nanfang Daily*: "It's not work that should be done by human beings." Beads like specks of grain must be neatly sewed into patterns.

"It's better done by child labor." The store boss said her sewing speed was far slower than that of child laborers, "as they were sharp-eyed and agile."

The eye of the bead can only accommodate a tiny needle. The children prick their hands by accident dozens of times a day. At the Yichun factory, the most skillful worker was 15-year-old Shao Ping. She got pricked nearly 10 times a day. Her hands were covered with calluses. "I am most afraid of pricking a needle into my nails." Shao Ping told *Nanfang Daily* that could draw tears.

The children's eyes often ache in the low light, and can hardly open from focusing tight on threading the needle. There is no eye medication in the factory's medicine bag. Many children suffer prolonged headaches.

Liu Yiluan, 13, cannot be without her headache pills anymore. She takes them two or three times an evening. Every time she takes the medicine from her boss, he



Huang Shuiru has skin rashes and blisters on both legs.

# Child Labor Scandal

Youngsters sew beads onto clothing in dark Guangzhou sweatshop

complains, "Why are you always getting headaches?" **Hard lives**

Congee, rice and pickles are all the children eat each day. The first meal is at 11:30 am, with fried cabbage and congee; the second at 5:30 pm, with rice and fried cabbage; and around 1 am, congee and pickles. The children often finished their meal inside five minutes and rushed back to work.

Sisters Huang Shuiru and Huang Shuihong have had no new clothes for more than a year. They swap clothing for variety's sake.

They spent more than 400 yuan this year, all on food. The 10-square-meter workplace had three daylight lamps, two fans, two tables, one VCD player and a speaker.

After the boss fell asleep, the children would chat together. But the boss would wake up if it was too noisy, and would twist the loudest child's ear and curse her. A child found asleep by the boss during working hours would be punished with ear-twisting.

The children's dormitory is a

10 minute walk from the factory in the fourth floor of a rented building. Two bedrooms house 13 children.

## Unknown incomes

How much they earn in a year entirely depends on the boss' will. He told the children he would share 40 percent of the annual profits with them as payment. But only he himself knows how much money he earns each year.

Salaries were paid at the end of the year only. Leave before that and not one cent is paid. The boss had his reasons: He must pay board and lodging for each child.

He also kept an accounts book recording daily work. He said that formed the basis of pay at the end of the year. The accounts showed Shao Ping as first ranking with a total of 1,700 yuan.

## 'How much can they make?'

Chen, boss of a Chongqing dishes restaurant here for many years, sniffed at the question from a *Nanfang Daily* reporter. "Many factories here allege they will pay at the end of the year, but many



Yichun sweatshop children are losing their eyesight. Photos by Yan Liang



By Gareth George

“Wait for us to come and get you. The guards have instructions to shoot.” The phone goes dead.

Said guard is eyeballing us. We do as we're told, and stand behind a line outside the car park at China Radio International (CRI). This is the station that supports China's original bilingual radio shows. With shows named things like “Easy” and “Joy”, the reception wasn't exactly what we had been expecting.

Inside, the welcome is decidedly warmer. Rick, better known to Chinese listeners as Li Ke, explains: “It's the same anywhere you go in the world. They broadcast nationally here. CRI broadcasts official government radio, like the BBC in Britain, so they look after us.”

He laughs. “And we feel very safe.”

Rick is host of Joy FM, one of the longest running and most popular bilingual shows, along with Yuan Yuan (or Lin). He has the easygoing enthusiasm you might expect of a man who's been filling the airwaves with laidback chat and easy listening tunes for more than 20 years: although he looks mid-30s, he could be over 80 – DJs don't age like real people. A November tan suggests traveler or playboy, and with “Florida, Hawaii, Hong Kong Shanghai and now Beijing” covering just the “DJ experience” section in his resume, he could claim to have influenced the record buying habits of a good portion of the civilized world. Rick joined Joy FM in Shanghai in 1996 before the show moved lock, stock and *lao wai* to Beijing's CRI building in 1998.

“The studio was built specifically for Joy FM,” he says. And what a studio. Giving fresh meaning to the phrase “the walls have ears”, every corner of the room is covered with photographs of listeners.

“We actually started with just one picture that a listener sent in. Then more and more people started to do it. I think it's more interesting to look at listeners when you're working, rather than pictures of artists. It gives you a sense of whom you're talking to.”

Some of the pictures have clearly been here a while. There are some addressed to Rick's previous co-host Jade, now working elsewhere at the station. And on a table by the mixing desk rests an in-tray brimming with new faces awaiting their staple: the latest generation of listeners. Joy FM has been around for 10 years now, with Rick helming eight. “Because of the emails and the SMS messages, we are really able to connect with the audience,” he says. “We don't just choose the music. We know the audience so this gives us a better reference – we can hit them directly with music they like.”

It must be working. Some figures suggest as many as 95 percent of university students have listened to Joy FM in the areas in which it's broadcast. “Students listen because they appreciate the bilingual nature of the show – English, without hitting them with 100 percent English. We all know the stress in China for learning English. It's like the second language here. “But after students graduate, we still maintain a lot of the listenership – people who have listened before often find it difficult to go back to other kinds of radio.”

Then he adds, “At least up until the time they get married, turn off the radio and switch on the TV.”

Rick's co-host Lin joined the show a year ago. Having worked in radio for just 18 months, she sees the chance to work with Rick as a huge opportunity: “Everyday is like a radio lesson. He's really good at talking and I'm just trying to learn from him.”

Lin was discovered when she won a competition on CCTV to find the best young English speaker. Rick was a judge. “I was still a student at the time and I was really nervous. It was pretty much my first experience of speaking in front of an audience. He was the only one who was really sitting up straight and making eye contact.”

Lin didn't know who Rick was at the time: “I knew he was from radio, but I wasn't really a radio fanatic... although now I am” she adds quickly. After the competition, Rick joked about soon needing a new co-host. And when Lin graduated, she came to work at CRI. “English is playing a more and more important role in Chinese society,” she says.

“English is part of our lives and the bilingual nature of the show makes it richer and more colorful. The



Rick and partner Lin

Photos by Bao Wei

# Ni Hao Are You?

Expat DJ proud to connect with giant Chinese fan base

*‘In some countries a DJ is just a voice that announces the time and the temperature and not much else. Here we encourage personality and people to be real. We want to hear and talk about real things, real people, real thoughts. Nothing scripted.’*



*“I think it's more interesting to look at listeners when you're working, rather than pictures of artists. It gives you a sense of whom you're talking to.”*

## Wheels of Steel

When not spinning discs, you might catch Rick tearing up a cycle lane near you on his Rollerblades. “I am a major Rollerblade fanatic – maybe six hours at a time,” he says.

According to Rick, Beijing's the best city in the world for Rollerblading: “It's flat. There's cycle lanes everywhere. I'll just throw on my skates and go! Tian'anmen Square, Sanlitun, Haidian... I don't cycle and I don't jog, but I wear out skates.” Rick even skated on CCTV 5. “It was during SARS, and so everyone was in to watch. It was a celebrity sport piece – just me skating around town.” What's got eight wheels and rocks? DJ Rick!



listeners love the chance to learn English from a native speaker. And they love to hear a Chinese in dialogue with a westerner. They think ‘Oh, I can use this phrase here.’” Lin pauses for a moment, then shouts over to Rick ‘and they love you, huh?’”

Rick sees his listeners as the true “modern Chinese.” Of course they're the new middle classes, the people with or on their way to a university education, but they're also the people in the cars, and the youth, the Chinese of tomorrow, people learning English and comfortable with modern Chinese music. “The old guys who want to listen to Peking Opera go elsewhere.”

Because of this, Rick has never seen any reason to limit Joy FM to a specific demograph. “We play a mixture. About two-thirds English or American music. Roughly the rest is contemporary Chinese, although we also play some Japanese and Korean music,” he smiles, “just to keep it interesting.”

Whether the tunes are new or old, the focus is on what's popular: “This isn't a radio course – we play what people like!” If a personal bias does creep into the selection, it's toward Rhythm and Blues and Hip-Hop. “I'm originally from Detroit (Michigan, USA) and this is the music of my hometown.”

Pop is a broad category. But when it comes to selecting records, Rick and Lin have a simple system. “Basically I choose mostly English and Lin chooses mostly Chinese. But I have a lot of experience with Chinese music, so we cross over.”

While the emphasis is on simplicity, like Confucius, Rick stresses the need for good planning.

“Preparation is always necessary for good radio. Otherwise you just end up talking about the color of the coffee and stupid little things in the studio.”

“But we (Rick and Lin) don't sit down together at all. If you went on a date and knew everything you were going to say, it would take the interest out of it. It's a matter of one person meeting another and asking ‘How was your day and what did you learn?’”

This confident, positive vibe is a riff that runs through almost every sentence. Doesn't he ever come to work in a stinking mood? “I try to leave foul moods out of the studio. We control our moods – we aren't controlled by them.”

It would be easy to raise a skeptical eyebrow here, but the co-host's little asides speak of genuine affection. They aren't actors – they do this seven days a week. “In some countries a DJ is just a voice that announces the time and the temperature and not much else. Here we encourage personality and people to be real. We want to hear and talk about real things, real people, real thoughts. Nothing scripted.”

On the show, Rick and Lin take emails and SMS messages and discuss their listeners' questions and comments between records. It feels like a lighthearted, feelgood chat session. Sure, you get the impression messages pondering Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* are pretty thin on the ground, but Rick gives genuine personal opinions about things like internet dating.

“Beijing was nothing like I expected it to be,” he says, leaning forward. “I thought it was this traditional old city where nothing modern was going on and then... well, you live here two weeks and I found I had more freedom here in this kind of radio than in other places. We use modern computers, but we make programs that try to appeal to people.”

“We want to get past the one dimensional: things like the Joy FM family,” he gestures at the wall of photographs. “Like ‘Ni Hao are you?’ – the show's signature phrase. People say this to us and we know they're in the fold.”

Unusually for a celebrity, Rick seems happier talking about his listeners than his own achievements.

“I respect the fact we have an audience and I try to treat 'em right. We try to come in without egos. To play what you want to hear and to make it as interesting as possible. I respect the fact that many Chinese will find it easier to remember a Chinese name – so they know me as Li Ke.”

“I'm still always surprised when people come up to me. And I've been really lucky to have beautiful and talented partners. You didn't hear that did you Yuan Yuan?” he adds, winking.

My translator inquires if he ever has male partners. Rick shrugs, “I've always reacted better to women.” Always? “It destroys the mystery of radio to reveal too many personal details – let's just say I'm over 40 with an attitude to life of about 26!”



# Campus Music Gets Louder and More Colorful

By Yang Huan

Hao Yu still remembers the scene when he sang in the auditorium at Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics last year. He was participating as a guest in the MTV-Samsung Campus Singing Contest. The audience didn't know him, but when the host read out the name of the song Hao was going to sing, they broke into thunderous applause.

The song, called *Private Study Room at College*, was composed by Hao, a 22-year-old undergraduate at Harbin Engineering University. It's a rap song, in which the singer criticizes bad behavior in private study rooms, such as lovers flirting, eating snacks and making mobile phone calls. Hao comes from Heilongjiang Province in the northeast of China, and he sang the song in his local dialect. The song was made into a flash, which has been widely distributed on the Internet.

The performance, as Hao Yu recalled, received an enthusiastic response from the audience. People were waving fluorescent sticks, screaming, and singing along with him. After the show, some students chased him for signatures. "I even became unable to write my own name in the end. I repeatedly asked myself: Who am I? Is this a dream?" said Hao.

Without a musical background, Hao taught himself to compose music just by listening. Since second year at university, he has been composing songs, most of which express his discontent with campus life in a satirical way.

Hao has recorded two rap songs, named *Feeble* and *Inertia*, because this style best allows him to express his feelings, he says. "Rap music tells real and concrete things, and it is popular with young people today. So, I choose to compose rap songs," said Hao. "I hope my songs will lead my peers to think, like pouring cold water on them."

Hao Yu is one of the growing number of campus composers in China. These students have a passion for music and they take it as an outlet for their thoughts and feelings. Their music talks about everything, ranging from the joy and woe in school days to observation of social phenomenon.

"Campus music comes from students' hearts and minds. It can be either critical or romantic. But the basic characteristic is that it reflects students' sincere and original emotions," said composer and producer Gao Xiaosong. Gao, a drop-out from Tsinghua University, is one of the first campus ballad singers.

Thanks to the growing integration of China into the world, students have more access to foreign music these days. With the booming of campus music, radio stations, universities and the Internet are providing more opportunities for these melodies to go public.

But campus music remains isolated from the overall music scene, as students are not professional composers and don't make profits for their music. Some students will continue to dedicate themselves to music after graduation; others will quit and consider finding jobs or pursue further study.

Campus music in China was once influenced by campus ballads in Taiwan. During the 1980's, a group of musicians led by the "Godfather of Taiwan music," Luo Dayou, dedicated themselves to writing songs in down-to-earth words, with easy-to-sing tunes. These songs, including *Childhood* and *Grandmother's Penghuwan* soon gained widespread popularity among the youth.

Since the mid 1980's, campus ballads have become part of the campus way of life on the mainland. Then, guitarists, who could write and sing began to appear at Beijing and Tsinghua University. As this group grew in number, it became a common spectacle for college students to sit on the lawn, singing campus ballads together.

In 1994 and 1995 three tapes were released called *Campus Ballads*, the first collection of campus music, containing songs such as the *Girl Beside Me in Class* and *Blue Dream*.

The campus music of the early 1990's was gentle in tone, mostly talking about the innocent and carefree school days. But now, students' vision is becoming broader. Apart from *Private Study Room at College*, Hao Yu has composed another rap song called *Moonlight Flowers*, mocking the empty spirit of college students, who idle their time away on campus.

Hao Yu said, "I hope my songs will arouse young people's consciousness about their shortcomings, leading

them to pursue their missions and values. I'm seeking full understanding from the listeners. I don't want to see that they only find my music interesting."

Some students compose for fun, while others view it as a road to dream. Shi Lu, a sophomore from Beijing Broadcasting Institute (BBI), is one who dreams of being a famous musician. Without any background in music, Shi learned everything she knows from one of her friends. Now, she plays drums in a band called U-Blue.

Since the band formed in 2002, Shi and the three other members, who come from the Capitol University of Economics and Business, have spent much of their free time composing and rehearsing. They have composed 12 songs so far, most of which are rock 'n' roll.

As an amateur band without financial support, U-Blue has met difficulties in rehearsal. Unable to afford a decent rehearsal room, they borrowed a one-storey unheated house from one of their friends.

"We all cherish the experience of teamwork, and our dream of music keeps us going. We hope our songs will become popular someday," said Shi.

U-Blue participated in a singing contest sponsored by Tong Yi in 2003, and won first prize for the Beijing zone. "We were very excited at that moment, because that's the best reward for us," Shi said.

For other campus composers, the dream of stardom is at hand, thanks to various channels that promote their works.

One of these channels is campus music contests. Now, an increasing number of universities in China hold music contests for students to display their talent and help recording companies find future stars.

Beijing Broadcasting Institute held such a contest in April. There were 87 original songs entered in the contest, mostly composed by BBI students, although a few came from other universities. The style of the songs ranged from pop music to rap.

The contest was jointly organized by the Institute and some top recording companies, including Warner Music, Universal, EMI and Sony. The winning composers would have the opportunity to sign contracts with one of these companies.

"The contest is aimed at providing students with a platform to show their talent, and it is an important way to promote artistic quality on campus," Zhang Fengyan, the organizer of the contest said.

The media also play a role in popularizing students' music. Beijing Music Radio launched a program called Music Pioneers on Campus in 2001. This program, jointly produced by 16 radio stations across China, broadcasts student songs nationwide from every Monday to Friday.

The program organizes music contests among Chinese universities every month to find talented campus composers. Zhang Heng, a sophomore from BBI studying recording engineering, has had three of his songs played by the program. "I'm very glad that my songs can reach more people," said Zhang.

But some students prefer the "underground." Hao Yu prefers the Internet to radio as a channel to popularize his music.

Feng Gang, a student from Beijing Normal University, is a fan of Hao's music. "I like the combination of music with flash. It's a novel and fashionable thing in the new age," said Feng.

The Internet also provides students with a way to express their grievances. The band U-Blue has composed a rap song called *English Class*, in which they express their dislike of studying English. The lyrics contain swearwords, and so the song has been banned by some universities. Shi Lu said, "If we put the song on the Internet, there will be less barriers."

Though the promotion channels for campus music has become more diversified, there is concern about copyright when students put their songs on the Internet, or recording companies want to buy the copyright of their songs.

Ma Jichao, director with Legal License Department of China Association for Music Copyright said, students should be wary of the contract terms offered by recording companies.

"Sometimes, recording companies want to buy the copyright for one instance only. But it's hard to say how popular the song will be in the future. In that case, students will probably not be able to collect any profits. To avoid such loss, students should preserve part of the copyright or place restrictions on the terms," said Ma.



Hao Yu

Photos provided by Hao Yu



By Sabu Zhang

An online magazine attracting much attention these days, *Coldtea*, gives readers a wealth of new ideas in the form of photographs, text and graphics.

**Pure and hip**

An Internet-based photographic magazine originated in Guangzhou, *Coldtea* was first known as *m4works* and has published 4 issues. In October 2003, Alex (Su Hanguang), editor in chief of m4works.com and Dr. (Ye Zhiming), editor in chief of outday.net merged their publications into one, which they named *Coldtea*.

The name is taken from the popular Cantonese beverage, and the fact that the short form, "CT" sounds like "city." On December 1, they released the first issue of *Coldtea*, and from then on, it has gradually gained popularity as a forum for presenting fresh ideas and attitudes of young people by visual means.

While some say CT copies Hong Kong magazine *Cream* or *Milk*, it is more about the culture of its birthplace – Guangzhou, where fairy tales are put on every day along with changes of values and attitude under the booming economy. CT is westernized, yet pure and hip, embodying the anxieties and confusion of an emotional young spirit. The content is mainly concerned with cutting-edge culture, the avant-garde and anything that might seem striking at the time.

**Online fairy tale**

If we did not have the Internet, there would be no such miracle of people with the same interests connecting together, to accomplish an even bigger dream. Is it just daydreaming if they want to establish their own magazine and express their own ideas?

The Internet makes anything possible. Especially for those who stay on line eight hours a day, an on-line magazine is a logical step. CT now gets 30,000 hits a month, and going by the messages they leave, its fans are crazy about it.

Since its birth, there have been over ten major media reports around the country describing CT as a new force of visual experience.

In mid September, as part of its first anniversary activities, the words of CT fans' were collected and shown online.

The 100-page webzine has regular columns, just like traditional magazines: People – an interview, Feature – normally the cover story, Sex – not only about sex, but sexy beings, Beauty – beautiful faces and cosmetics, Feeling – showing inner chaos of city people by distinct images; Nutrition – music, movie and gourmet recipes.

Every month, members hold online meetings to choose topics, arrange tasks and interviews and get the pictures done to finish the last step. They have text editors, graphic designers and their own models and make-up artists. The core production team consists of about 15 people, most of whom live in Guangzhou. Group

meetings using QQ (a popular online-chat tool) enable them to exchange views and information efficiently. They also rent a three-room apartment in Guangzhou for studio shoots.

CT fans from all over the world log on to the CT BBS to communicate, or register CT Blogs to build up their own online space. CT has also set up its own lomography society, called N-G Organization, as a special section in the BBS for fans of this particular version of photography.

**Ideas and philosophy**

As one of the two founders of *Coldtea*, chief editor Alex has a unique philosophy for life and a way of expressing his overwhelming vision. He is professional at shooting pictures, as now, most pictures in the magazine are his works. The other founder Dr. is a typical IT man, well versed in business operations like online-distribution and advertising. He and Alex spend about 1,000 yuan a month on studio rental, props, models and film, and devote all their spare time to CT.

Some CT members like extreme sports, some like shooting DV, some like cooking western-style food,

some are fanatical about blogging. They are archetypes of the late-70s and early-80s generation, who are now pursuing their own dreams, somewhat free of the old social restrictions

and values. They are more open-minded than their parents, and take more responsibility for their own decisions. They adventure a lot and party a lot.

Alex once wrote in CT, "Why do young people begin to work at an earlier age? Because they need money. Our society seems abnormal, for when you need money you don't have enough, when you get enough you are so old that money means little to you. It'll be more and more depressing if our society runs like this. It would be better if it worked this way: We are born at the age of 70; finish college at 50 and begin to work at 40 or so, then become rich at 30 after 10 years' hard working, then we can enjoy our youth with the money. We finally turn to babies when we die."

**Era of fantasy**

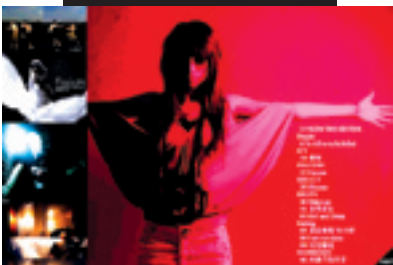
"We have no future no past, we just live in a moment." This is what Alex often boasts in his magazine, and maybe this is the reason they haven't thought much about printing and publishing it, though that does remain a dream for them both. "We just do it for ourselves", said Dr, "We don't have to worry about distribution hassles or advertiser's interests. In fact, we are not ready to make it commercial." But at least, they will keep it online and do their best to lead the trend.

In mid September, *Coldtea* held an anniversary party. A hundred CT fans

gathered together and had fun over two days of camping and dancing. It is hard to predict *Coldtea's* future, but at least, it has ushered in a new era of online magazines and will bring it along even further.



## Online Fantasy – A Webzine Made in China





## What's New

By Tom Spearman

CD



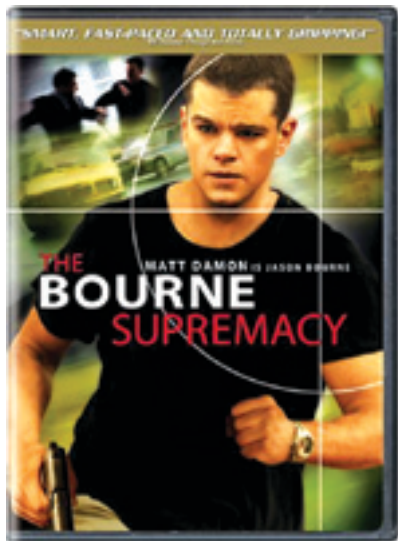
## Strangers, by Ed Harcourt

There's a certain kind of album where you buy it just because there's one stand-out song you've heard or heard about and you've just got to have. Often it turns out to be easily the best song there and the others are somewhat disappointing by comparison.

That's only partially the case with *Strangers*, the third album from singer-songwriter Ed Harcourt. Proclaimed as a major new talent, his first record was a patchy affair and so is this, with some pointless, tuneless, meandering moments. But there are some terrific songs, such as opening track *The Storm is Coming*, *The Trapdoor* and *Kids*.

And *This One's For You*, a melancholic, cautiously optimistic love song, is so good that even if the other tracks were all rubbish, this album would still be an essential purchase.

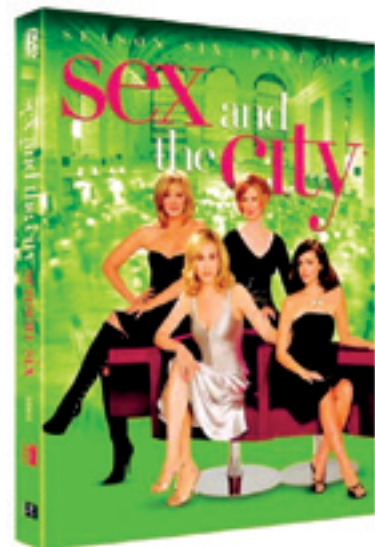
DVD



## The Bourne Supremacy

Bourne is back, in the second in a spy movie franchise that looks ready to take over from the tired old Bond films. What makes the Bourne movies seem more relevant is that they tap into the modern mood of cynicism about intelligence agencies and aim for a semblance of realism. They also pack superb action sequences and just enough character development.

The first movie followed amnesiac former CIA hitman Bourne, played in fine butt-kicking style by Matt Damon, as he tried to piece his identity together. Now, he's living peacefully in India, thinking he's left the past behind, only for it to come exploding back into his life. The movie doesn't really develop a promising Russian oil corruption subplot, but it's still a thrilling ride.



## Sex and the City, Season Six

This has been around in Beijing for a while, but only the recorded-off-TV version with poor picture quality. Season five has been available locally for more than a year, but now, for fans who've been hanging on for the proper release of the sixth season, the wait is finally over.

It's a bittersweet moment, however, as this is the final season, with questions of earth-shattering importance still to be answered – Will Miranda get over herself and give Steve a chance? Will Samantha realize there's more to life than a quick shag?

But, most vital of all, will Carrie's romantic destiny finally be resolved? Big's been there, hovering around for quite a while now. He's available and he's outlasted Carrie's many other long-suffering admirers, but there's a serious challenge from promising new beau Berger.

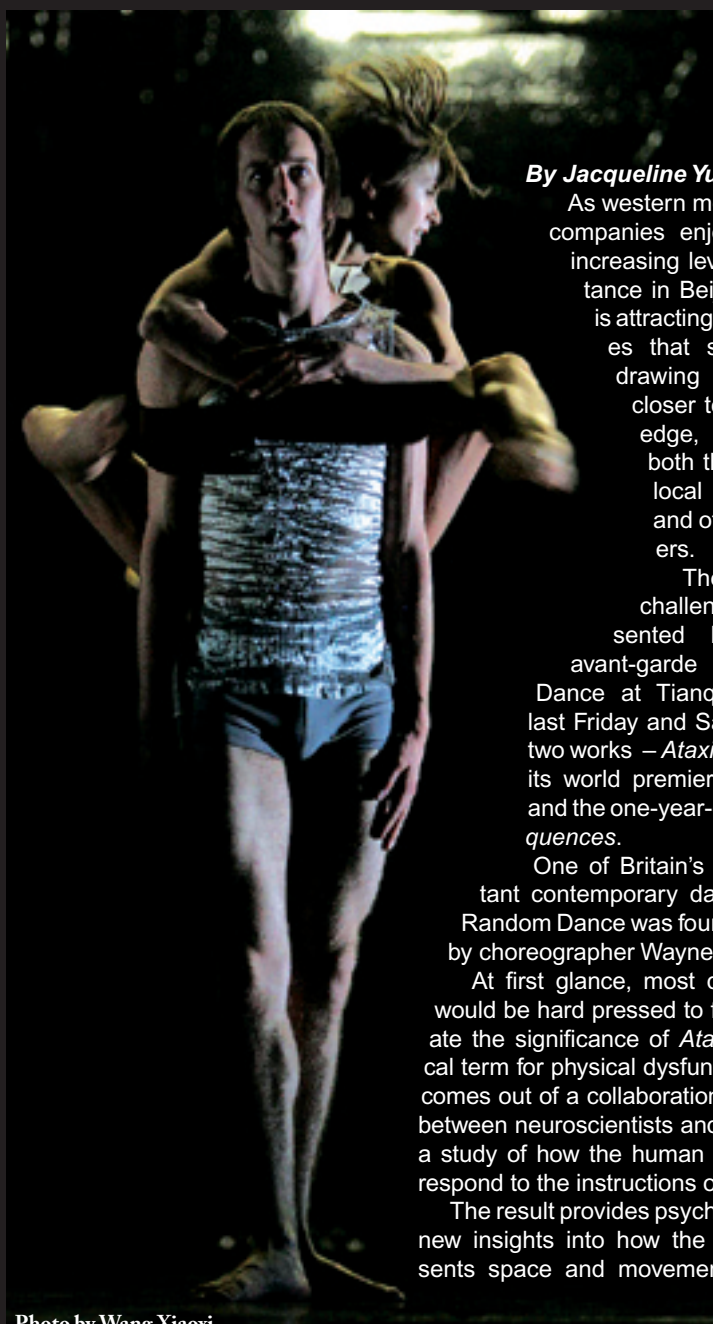


Photo by Wang Xiaoxi

## Random Movement

By Jacqueline Yu

As western modern dance companies enjoy an ever-increasing level of acceptance in Beijing, the city is attracting performances that seem to be drawing closer and closer to the cutting edge, challenging both the nerves of local audiences and of the promoters.

The latest such challenge was presented by Britain's avant-garde Random Dance at Tianqiao Theater last Friday and Saturday, with two works – *Ataxia*, which had its world premiere this June, and the one-year-old *Polar Sequences*.

One of Britain's most important contemporary dance groups, Random Dance was founded in 1992 by choreographer Wayne McGregor.

At first glance, most dance lovers would be hard pressed to fully appreciate the significance of *Ataxia* (a medical term for physical dysfunction), which comes out of a collaboration experiment between neuroscientists and dancers on a study of how the human body fails to respond to the instructions of the mind.

The result provides psychologists with new insights into how the brain represents space and movement, and also

helps Wayne McGregor, the choreographer and the director of the company, to find new language for the stage – so new that this hour-long dance, which uses fresh, radical and complex technology, on both dancers and stage, seemingly overloaded the audience with more information than we could process. We were made graphically aware of how our brains are struggling to cope.

During the opening section, the 10 dancers navigated patterns of restless flickering movement to the tightly meshed energy of Michael Gordon's score under bursts of light like neurons misfiring. And then, the group broke into disintegrative pas de deux or solos, which appeared to be trapped inside loops of flailing, faltering moves, showing off each individual's exquisite physical intelligence.

These hints of chaos gradually built to a crisis in which disjointed words chased each other across the stage and the music thins to white noise. The audience then found they were sitting facing a stage without dancers, seeming to dissolve into an electric brain-storm.

Pulsing currents of brightly colored light streamed in disorienting patterns around the space, in which appear staccato and meaningless words. This color storm continued for so long that when it finally did stop, the audience collectively breathed

a sigh of relief.

Polar Sequences was delightful to watch, though it continued to be fast, bizarre, intricate and physically brutal.

It presents three pieces by three different contemporary choreographers – Rui Horta (best known in Britain for his legendary work for the dance company S.O.A.P), Shobana Jeyasingh (one of the leading exponents of contemporary Indian dance) and Wayne McGregor, all seamlessly sealed together into one.

In the opening section, the dancers grouped close together, their bodies tenderly shaping communal rhythms and patterns. The music transformed from an aria into searing noise – so loud the audience recoiled in shock – forcing the dancers onto separate paths, their limbs hardening into aggressive lines.

From then to the final ensemble, the dancers' renewed collective energy looked somehow competitive.

When it ended, the audience was reluctant to begin applauding, maybe expecting one more journey of exploration.

## Salome, Not Just Another Love Story

By Pan Hao

In time with the rhythmic clapping of the audience, the flamenco dancers stepped forward by turn, showing off their best moves. They improvised without any repetition, while the other dancers provided the backing rhythm, clapping their hands and stamping in 6/8 time. The face of each one was transformed by a passionate smile, and joy seemed to pour out from their bodies.

This was Spain's Aida Gomez Theatre Dance Company, performing their version of *Salome* last Thursday at Poly Theater. *Salome* is a biblical tale adapted by the English playwright Oscar Wilde, directed by legendary Spanish dance guru, Carlos Saura. The cast was led by the renowned Aida Gomez, who is reputed to be the world's greatest flamenco dancer.

A classic tale of jealousy, sensuality and revenge, *Salome* is ideally suited to the form of flamenco dance. As the story goes, Salome asked for the head of John the Baptist in return for dancing in front of her step-father and uncle, King Herod.

The first part of the show was traditional flamenco dance. Perfect timing, beautiful Andalusian costumes, the clicking of castanets, and the unique foot stamping that evolved from gypsy dances immediately transported the audience into a wild and colorful world. The guitar accompaniment, using the traditional phrygian musical scale, provided

passion, tender romance and any mood in between that was required. The last solo dance by Aida Gomez was definitely one of the highlights of the night.

The second part of the show, with the long-awaited appearance of Salome, blended love, hate and lust, contrasting textures with more complexity than the first half. Salome, the daughter of Herodias decides to use her influence over King Herod, whom she seduces, to have John the Baptist killed, because John the Baptist has devoted his life to God and refuses her overtures of love. She is a woman born for seduction and revenge, using her dangerous beauty to full advantage.

The music during the second half was a mixture of Indian and Arabian, with less Spanish influence. The scene in which Salome performs the dance of the seven veils is without doubt another highlight of the show, bringing the theme of lust and sexuality to its highest point.



Photo by Tian Yufeng

## Club Unplugged

By Ian Provan

Recreating live the sound a band produces in the recording studio is always tricky. For a duo, it's generally going to be a little harder, and for a duo that relies heavily on clever production, cleverer producers and a bunch of pony-tailed engineers to get it all sounding just right, some hard choices are going to have to be made.

These choices might boil down to; use tapes; invite some other musicians to help out; buy lots of expensive computerized equipment and use sampling and other technology to make extra noise; or do an unplugged, stripped down, back-to-basics, more or less acoustic set.

Swedish duo Club 8 rather inexplicably chose the last option for their gig at Get Lucky last Saturday. For read-



Photo by Mazz

ers unfamiliar with Club 8, the band burst onto the Scandinavian club scene in 1995 with the EP *Me Too*, and have since released five albums and a handful of EPs.

In 2001 they came equal eighth in a poll for favorite indie band on TweeNet, which pretty much tells you all you

need to know. Think *Big Big Girl* without the irony, *Please Mister Postman* without the pent up sexual longing.

Reviews of Club 8 albums invariably refer to the Portishead influence, and just as it's hard to imagine coming away from a Portishead unplugged gig with the feeling that it had been money well spent, seeing Club 8 live was a little like paying to see someone perform karaoke with a broken karaoke machine.

Vocalist Karolina Komstedt sat primly on a stool for most of the brief set, occasionally reaching over to play a few notes of incredibly dinky sounding keyboard accompaniment. The other half of the duo, Johan Angergard, alternated between acoustic guitar turned way down low and almost inaudible electric guitar, and for

at least two songs, flicked a switch on a drum machine to provide some very minimalist rhythm backing.

A drum kit and other instruments left on the stage by the two support bands only added to the impression that something was definitely missing here.

As to the two support bands, the first, called No Colour, was all Cure haircuts and Morrissey misery (now that guy has a lot to answer for ...), and didn't play for very long.

The second, Crystal Butterfly, from Shanghai, had much better haircuts, except for the guitarist, who had a bit of a ponytail thing happening, and were more of a straight down the line rock 'n' roll outfit, with a bit of a Power Station influence. But sometimes, simple works.



By Xie Lixue

Using foreign professionals to encourage local employees to think and conduct business with an international perspective is an intriguing new policy.

Next month, the contract of Nilesh Sharma, the first Indian project official in Shaoxing Municipal Investment Promotion Authority (SIPA) expires. Three new foreign experts from Germany, United States and Japan are now being hired by the water city just 70 kilometers from Hangzhou.

Nilesh drew attention when he took the job last year and drew even more attention recently when he appeared to have lost it. What foreigners have to say about their work experience in China continues to fascinate Chinese.

**Story of Nilesh**

As the first foreign official at a governmental institute in Shaoxing, Nilesh started his job there in September 2003. Last Thursday, the news reported Nilesh's unemployment.

"Actually, he was transferred to the department of investment services, taking charge of trade promotion. It was a normal position shift," said Shen Lianjin, director of investment division, to *Beijing Today* on Monday. "Although the contract is up next month, he has demonstrated his ability and willingness to stay."

"I like my job," said Nilesh. "It's very challenging and different from my previous work as a teacher or a consultant."

# Foreigners Live and Learn on the Job in China

I learnt a lot during the exploration in trade. I don't plan to work at other places, at least for a few years yet."

As for the arrival of three new foreign experts, SIPA's project official Sun Zhongwei told *Beijing Today* that his director general Sheng Qiuping was currently in Japan, and had talked with the professionals there about working for the authority.

**Foreigners in China**

According to the State Statistics Bureau, in 2003, foreign experts working in China reached 390,000, with 247,000 from abroad and 143,000 from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan. Of them, 47.5 percent had been resident for years and 52.5 percent were short-term.



Nilesh Sharma works in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province

Photo by BQB

Guangdong Province hired 100,000, Shanghai 70,000 and Jiangsu Province 55,000 foreign experts. More than 28,000 worked in Beijing last year.

Foreigners working in China are categorized into two types: first, economic and technological experts in industry, commerce, finance and foreign-invested

ventures and second, cultural and educational professionals in higher education, press and publishing, scientific research, culture, the arts, healthcare and sports.

Since August 23 this year, foreigners are now able to obtain a "Chinese green card", making working conditions more attractive and tolerable.

**Attraction and differences**

Many foreigners were travelers before they chose to work in China. It is the fascinating scenery, people, culture and economic growth that attract them to stay.

Nilesh said he had traveled through many places in China, including Beijing and Shanghai. But the beauty of Shaoxing made him decide to work and live there. "Shaoxing is the Venice of China and I am so fond of it. In my spare time, I like to read the books of Lu Xun."

Shen said Nilesh was a good employee, although his work style had created some conflict with local employees.

J Kent Hamby, vice president of human resources at British Petroleum China also told his experience of culture shock to *Beijing Today*.

"My Chinese colleagues are so hard-working and strict on themselves. I think that is caused by a cultural difference. Once, a girl wrote a list of her own bad points on the performance survey. It hit me because I thought she had come to do something pretty good. Later, I know that to be self-critical is seen as means of improvement by some eastern people."

## Xoceco Throws Cash at TV Designers

By Xie Lixue

Xoceco, one of the major electronic producers in China, is looking for 120 TV set designers offering annual salaries up to 300,000 yuan, according to the company's latest press release on its own website.

Xoceco's spokesman, Sun Guangrong, told *Beijing Youth Daily* that liquid crystal and plasma TV sets are the bestseller in the market, his company needs more professionals to strengthen its capability of product design.

## Five Sectors to See Upsurge in Jobs

By Zhang Nan

Coal mining, energy, tourism, hotel management, textiles, water and gas supply will require more labor in the years to come, according to a market survey released last Monday.

The survey was conducted jointly by Xinhua News Agency, the Development Research Center (DRC) of the State Council, Shanghai-based Fudan University, and Shanghai Social Science Academy. It stresses that the oil and natural gas industry has the brightest future in China.

The automobile and real estate industries face tough years as the central bank clamps down on interest rates, aiming to cool these sectors.

## Graduates in Nanjing

By Xie Lixue

Thirteen thousand five hundred university graduates have registered unemployed, according to the Nanjing Labor and Social Security Bureau of Jiangsu Province last week.

One-fifth of the unemployed received higher education.

The local *Jinling Evening News* analyzed that because large numbers of students rushed into the popular fields such as law, computer science and accounting over the past several years, it is not easy for them to find jobs.

## Recruits Shy of Official Jobs

By Zhang Nan

More than 400 central government positions cannot attract qualified candidates, according to Tuesday's Nanjing Morning News.

By the end of October, 310,656 applicants had registered to compete for the 8,400 vacancies prepared by the central government and its affiliates for 2005.

The 400 positions that have not attracted enough applicants are related to aviation, traffic management, maritime affairs, mining, meteorology, vulcanology and quantity surveying. Extremely unpopular was working as a taxation official or auditor in rural areas.



Domestic insurance market will open completely to foreign investors by the end of this year, according to China's WTO entry promise. This is firing the salaries of the sector, particularly of the senior staff.

Photo by Photocom

## Insurance Companies Pay the Big Bucks

By Xie Lixue

The domestic insurance market will open completely to foreign investors at the end of this year. Insurance is prospering, with nearly 90 percent of companies adding 10-30 percent new employees in the last year.

A salary survey by Taihe Consulting Company of 20 insurance companies including state, joint-venture and foreign firms found that the highest pay raise was awarded to salespeople.

Professional raises varied ranged between 5.7 and 25.9 percent in the last two years. "For the salespeople, the salary depends greatly on their performance. Thus every

month, they may earn down to 1,000 yuan or up to payments higher than some managers," Zhang Ying, human resources manager of CITIC Prudential, Beijing branch, told *Beijing Youth Daily*.

Financial managers earn the top salaries at insurance firms, earning on average 510,000 yuan annually including wages, allowances and various welfare payments. Next are asset management managers with 480,000 yuan and administrative managers at 460,000. Although human resources managers place ninth at 360,000 yuan, that sort of salary is hard to beat in other fields.

At middle management level, professionals who combine management and sales experience are preferred. Sales managers can make 370,000 yuan.

A paucity of actuaries, professionals who design insurance programs, means top money is available. Wu Xi, a consultant at Taihe Consulting Company, told *Beijing Youth Daily* in November that an actuary could earn as high as 1 million a year. This has attracted many examinees for the certificate. But a successful candidate still needs 5-7 years' work experience and knowledge of maths, economics, accounting, law and even sociology.

**Campus Recruitment Tour:**

## Sony: Built with Lego Bricks

By Xie Lixue

"We want Lego blocks, not building blocks," Zhang Yanmei, vice president of Sony China's Human Resources, told students of Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications on November 8, the first stop of her company's recruitment tour in Beijing.

"The bumps of Lego make each piece firmly linked, which is of critical importance to the teamwork of electronic products, including electronic games and entertainment content, design and production," explained Jun Chizawa, vice president of Sony China.

This year, Sony's recruitment involves online application with the deadline of November 30, evaluation and selection by December 15, exam and interview between December 17 and 30, and 2-3 months internship, starting late January.

Vacancies include sales & marketing, software and hardware engineering and technical support. The complete positions and application forms are available at: <http://career.sony.com.cn>.

**Q: We understand you prefer master's graduates. Do you have**

**any limitation on the bachelor's graduates to hire?**

A: There is an approximate percentage between the bachelor's and master's. But we recruit new employees focusing on their competence with the requirements for the posts.

**Q: I can't speak Japanese. Does that matter?**

A: Every day I receive 100 e-mails, 10 in Japanese, 10 in Chinese, and the rest in English. If you know both English and Japanese, that's excellent, but just English is fine. One successful example is Ms. Zhang, who can only speak English.

**Q: What are you looking for and how should we prepare for the interview?**

A: Your dynamic thoughts give you the edge. Sony needs young people like you that can provide creative ideas to keep up with the rapid growth of the market and the company.

As for the interview, I strongly recommend you carefully prepare your resumes, to highlight your advantages meeting the company's requirements.

For example, Coca-Cola can't change

its products and so new ideas should be about promotion. Sony wants its customers to toss the outdated Walkman and buy MP3 players. You can bet on the result of two copies of the same resume for these two companies.

*Notes: Multinationals are conducting a new round of graduates hunting on campus this month.*

Beijing Today is reporting on each company's campus tour, particularly the new jobs offered.

Please log on to our new column: Campus Recruitment Tour.

### Jobs

Female Beijinger, 29, majored in accounting with Public Accountant Certification, fluent in English, both writing and speaking, is looking for a full-time job related to finance or part-time job related to English.

Tel: 8347-7009

E-mail: lily948@hotmail.com

Excellent Korean language translation service at 150yuan/1,000 words.

Tel: 0411-8647 6033

Fax: 0411-8647 2735

E-mail:

choigunhwa@vip.sina.com,

choigunhwa@hotmail.com

Beijing Fei Wanda is looking for three print designers, two commercial advertising collectors and two secretaries. Contact: 8737-8652 ext.82 or 83. E-mail: kf@fwd863.com

Webmasters wanted. Familiarity with the Internet, web page design and music composing software essential. Love of music useful. Contact Mr. Hu at 6333-1671 ext. 8006.

A graduate of information management from Huazhong S&T University in Wuhan, sophisticated in C/C++, VC6.0, VFP, Access, SQL Server, Activex and software developing, familiar with Flash, Photoshop, Excel, PP uses. Also familiar with medical English and Latin.

Contact: 13622751429

E-mail: waairu@sohu.com,

sonx7@163.com

Looking for two engineers in wastewater disposal and treatment. English and Autocad are musts. We'll provide training opportunities once recruited, both at home and abroad.

E-mail: hr@ouyawater.com

Website: [www.ouyawater.com](http://www.ouyawater.com)

An experienced Singaporean woman, piano teacher, looks to provide lessons at students' homes. Holds a diploma in piano performance and a grade 8 in theory from the ABRSM as well as a bachelor's of architecture. Currently pursuing film composition with Trinity College. Hope to engage people of all ages in music-making. Please e-mail to: joilesg@yahoo.com.sg or call: 13691278574.

A 41-year-old unemployed man is looking for a job asap. I can drive, speak English and am honest and responsible. Contact me at: 1364 1299276 or e-mail wanglijiali@126.com.

A private medical clinic in Dongcheng is looking for a medical clinic secretary.

Requirements: fluent English and Mandarin with superior phone skills. Medical knowledge and terminology desirable. One-year commitment required.

Duties: Reception, phone, marketing/advertising, book-keeping, appointment scheduling for doctors.

Pay: 4,000 RMB/mo if able to perform all listed duties.

Send resume to:

confidantmedical@yahoo.com

A cultural media company wants to hire a foreigner for international business.

Requirements: male, British, long time in Beijing, love Chinese culture, stable, honest. Legal experience an advantage.

Contact:

sun198052@yahoo.com.cn

(You are welcome to send positions offered and wanted info to: [ayi@ynet.com](mailto:ayi@ynet.com). Beijing Today does not take any responsibility for the accuracy and authenticity of the information published in this column.)

**A Beijing-based English newspaper is looking for reporters, freelancers and editors.**

**Chinese applicants should have university degrees in English or related majors and media experience.**

**Foreigners from the UK and US with relevant media experience preferred.**

**Please send resumes and writing samples to: [hr@ynet.com](mailto:hr@ynet.com).**



# Straight Truth about English Training

By Zhang Nan

Studying abroad is a dream shared by increasing numbers of people in China, who hope not only to further their academic educations in foreign countries but also to learn about life through experiencing different cultures.

Those dreams are in turn fueling the rapid development of the English training industry in China, as more people enroll in courses to help them prepare to go abroad by improving their practical English and nailing high scores on language examinations needed for being accepted to universities and getting visas.

Behind the facade of the English training industry's explosive growth, however, serious problems have appeared, such as the rise of unqualified training schools and poor quality courses.

This Monday, Jiang Bo, CEO of Juren Education Group and former director of New Oriental Education Group, sat for an interview with *Beijing Today* to talk about the condition of the English training market in China.

In general, Jiang expressed optimism about the future of the field in this country. "English training will be an industry in China and English education will be considered as a genuine kind of service and product," he said.

## State of China's market for English training:

**Beijing Today: Could you briefly describe the current scale of the domestic market for English training for going abroad?**

Jiang Bo: Studying abroad is an increasingly popular choice, so the number of students participating in language examinations is swelling. Nowadays, more than 1,000 language training schools of different sizes are operating in China and around 300,000 people enroll in English training courses each year.

**BT: How developed is this market and industry?**

Jiang: At present, the English training market is only in its initial stage of development. It will take a period of steady development for this market to mature.

**BT: Have any foreign English training schools or institutions entered the Chinese market?**

Jiang: Foreign English training schools or institutions will enter the Chinese market sooner or later before 2008. According to China's World Trade Organization (WTO) entry agreements, China's educational market will not open until 2005, but some foreign training schools have been making advance preparations in order to be strong players as soon as they come into the market. A few foreign language schools, such as Wall Street English and EF Education, have started operating in



English learning fever has struck this nation and Beijing is no exception. Even the Beijing government is getting in the game, sponsoring events like the Third Foreign Language Festival at the Working People's Cultural Palace near the Forbidden City in mid-October, with the intent of raising the number of local speakers of foreign tongues to around five million before the start of the 2008 Olympics.

Of course, those kinds of numbers mean big business opportunities and language training schools and programs are mushrooming across China, angling to capitalize on ever-rising demand. Prospective students should keep in mind that quality in this emerging industry is spotty at best.

Photos by Photocom



Jiang Bo, CEO of Juren Education Group

China.

**BT: What is your opinion about the future of this market?**

Jiang: The 2008 Olympics and China's entrance to the WTO will make English more and more important in Chinese people's eyes. Also with Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Britain broadening their visa policies towards Chinese students, there will be more chances for students to go abroad. And as China further opens, English will become a necessary skill for the workplace. So, demand for English training will only increase.

The English training market will become more commercial, more professional, and more socialized.

**BT: What are the shortcomings of the current English training market?**

Jiang: One is that training schools and institutions are all mixed up. Among all the training schools in China now, few are qualified and can provide students high-quality training courses.

Second is the similarity of training courses. Most training schools do not develop their own training methods and courses, they just copy from other schools.

Third, the quality of training courses is a concern. According to the Beijing Consumers' Association, English training is a hot point for consumer complaints.

Four, few training schools can provide students continued services after they complete courses, so many students' English levels slip after they finish their classes.

Five, and this is the biggest problem, is that most training courses focus almost exclusively on examination skills, not on improving students' real English abilities. Such courses require students to memorize vocabulary, sentence structures, grammar and so on. Students then can get high marks on the TOEFL, IELTS or other exams, but most cannot really speak English well at all.

**Training schools in China:**

**BT: Some training schools provide students both language courses and consulting services on going abroad, giving them information about foreign schools and majors and helping them go through application and visa procedures. What do**

**you think of these schools?**

Jiang: In my opinion, schools should concentrate on education. Leave the consulting work to professional companies.

**BT: What basic courses do national training schools provide?**

Jiang: Courses at these schools mainly focus on examination skills, though some stress basic English ability training. In the future, training courses should offer students comprehensive training to improve their English speaking, reading, writing and more. Follow-up services will also be provided to students.

**BT: Some training schools in China focus more on earning money than training students. What do you think of them?**

Jiang: Some schools spend a lot of time and money on promotion, trying to get people to recognize their names. But what is far more important is for a school to provide courses and services to meet the demands of the market. Some schools are even not qualified to provide training courses. The glut of training schools and advertisements can make it hard for students to make the best choices. Schools should have unified ways of managing and serving students.

**For students:**

**BT: Many Chinese students get high marks in language examinations like the TOEFL, GRE and IELTS. Do you think high marks will help them study abroad?**

**How should students look at English training courses?**

Jiang: High marks do not mean anything. I have seen a lot of students who have high marks in examinations but cannot communicate well abroad and have to come back to China to improve their English. Real English ability is a comprehensive skill, not just high exam scores.

Students should pursue a solid knowledge base, not just take training courses to get diplomas or pass exams. They should combine their English studies with their hopes for the future and the expansion of their knowledge.

**BT: How can students improve their English and develop real and comprehensive English abilities?**

Jiang: Learning a language is different from studying other fields, so students should establish reasonable, scientific study methods and go at their studies with passion. They should be ready to persist with their studies no matter how many times they feel they have failed.

**BT: Do you have any suggestions for students preparing to or interested in taking English training courses?**

Jiang: Most important is to identify what you really need or want. Don't just look at a school's reputation – the quality of courses is key. I believe that course quality is directly related to teacher quality. Only teachers that have undergone excellent training and earned their positions can provide high-quality training to students.

## US Tour Promotes Chinese Education

By Zhao Hongyi

Ten universities from China, including Beijing University, Tsinghua University, Shanghai Jiaotong University and Chongqing University arrived in New York this week on the first leg of the 2004 Study in China US tour intended to attracting more Americans to study in China.

As of the end of 2002, 7,359 American students were studying in China, according to the Chinese Service Center for Scholarly Exchanges (CSCSE), organizer of the tour. That number is increasing 30 percent annually, making the US the third largest source of students studying in China, trailing only Taiwan and Hong Kong.

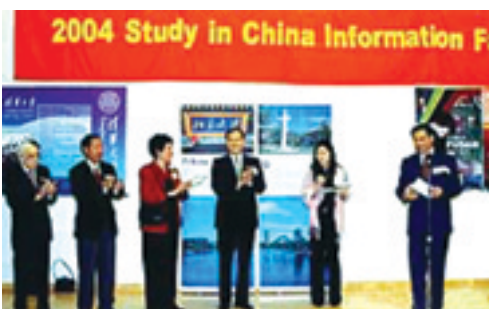
"Students can learn about China's splendid culture and its rapidly growing market potential," Shao Wei, head of the delegation and deputy director of CSCSE, told the audience at the tour's opening ceremony last

Monday in downtown Manhattan's Asian Culture Center.

The imbalance of student exchange between the two countries is another potential market to explore, noted Peggy Brumenshar, vice chairman of the US Institute of International Education, an independent organization promoting international education entrusted to run the Fulbright scholarship program by the US State Department. The number of Chinese students enrolled in the US is over 20 times greater than the number of Americans in China.

CSCSE will run other tours in Japan and Europe later this month to attract more Chinese scholars and graduates to return to China to work.

Next week, the universities' US tour will take them to the "windy city," Chicago.



Photos by Zhao Haiyan / China News Service (CNS)

## Israeli Embassy Launches Website in Chinese

By Ayi

The Embassy of Israel in Beijing launched its first website last week to help more Chinese learn about the country.

Silvan Shalom, Israel's deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, attended the site's launch ceremony during a visit to Beijing last week.

The bilingual site, in English and Chinese, provides basic facts about Israel and information on such topics as the Middle East peace process and China-Israel relations.

It also offers links to other websites of the Israeli government.

The site address is: <http://beijing.mfa.gov.il>,

## Ask Ayi:

**Q: I want to further my studies in the UK. I have heard that the universities there offer English proficiency courses before academic semesters begin. Could you give me some detailed information?**

— googleboy

A: Aside from the English proficiency courses provided by colleges and universities in the UK, many other types of English courses are also available. They include:

General and Intensive English at all levels – English for daily life in an English-speaking country;

Foundation and Access Courses – preparation for courses in colleges and universities, combining academic English with study skills and study of an academic or professional subject;

English for Academic or Specific Purposes – English as a preparation for academic study or for a profession, such as law, medicine or tourism management;

English for Business/Executives – usually intensive courses covering English for international finance, law and marketing;

English Plus/Work Experience – a general English course combined with study of another subject such as business studies or IT/computing, with work experience in that subject;

Adult Vacation (ages 18 and over) – General English combined with activities to suit your interests, from golf to Scotch whisky tasting;

Junior Vacation (ages 5 to 17) – General English combined with a social, sports and visits program;

One to One – personalized individual tuition between only one teacher and one student;

Home Tuition – one-on-one tuition in a teacher's own home;

Courses for Teachers – teacher development courses and courses leading to qualifications from post-graduate certificates to doctorates.

**Q: I just got a bachelor's degree in English and have been advised to further my studies in the field of education in the US. Can you give me some details about this academic field?**

— Jennif

A: Many universities and colleges in the US have graduate schools of education. They offer a wide range of courses, including childhood, elementary and secondary or higher education, education in professional subjects such as arts, math or music, special education, educational psychology and general education, meaning teaching and curriculum, leadership studies and educational theory.

With a degree in English and an interest in teaching, one possible direction for your studies would be TESOL, or teaching English as a second language.

**Q: I am set to study at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. How can I get health insurance coverage there?**

— pine 11

A: If you have health insurance in China, your policy may cover you in Singapore, or could be made to do so for a small extra fee.

Alternatively, your school may be able to arrange cheap health insurance for you. A typical health insurance policy will cost you around S\$10 a month.

Singapore has an excellent healthcare system, but you may find the charges higher than in China.

**Q: If I go to France to study, do I need to be able to speak French?**

— 97oppel

A: If you study in fields like management and tourism or in MBA courses in French business schools, you do not need to be able to speak French. TOEFL or IELTS scores are required. However, speaking some French will help you a lot in your daily life.

If the courses that you have applied for are taught in French, you must learn French.

Requirements for getting a visa to study in a French-taught program are: 1) No less than 500 hours of French language course work in China; and 2) a score of at the very least 150 out of 900 on the TEF French language examination. Students hoping to enroll in courses taught in French must take this test.

(Edited by Zhang Nan / Xie Lixue)



By Lv Pinrou

Towering over the Guomaoqiao flyover with its cluster of striking white cement and glass monoliths, the new Jianwai SOHO complex is the kind of landmark there is no way to not have an opinion about. Some hail it as upscale modernity incarnate, earning its place as the backdrop for many recent television commercials (including Coke's unavoidable Olympic spots). Others slam it as a frightening vision of sterile, homogenous living straight out of *The Matrix*.

The rise of several restaurants in the compound of late raises a potentially more important issue. An intriguing diversity of cuisines are represented, from Japanese, American, Thai and fusion to Guizhou, Taiwanese and Guangxi-style food. So forget the area's aesthetics – how's the food?



Anping zha xiajuan, 28 yuan, at Anping Gujie Meishiguan



Sour-spicy raw shrimp, 48 yuan, at Bangkok, Bangkok



Midoufu, 18 yuan, at Sange Guizhou Ren



Beef belly rice noodles, 18 yuan, at Mifen Xiangxiang

Photos by Li Shuzhuan

# Meals among Monoliths

## Delving into the dining options at Jianwai SOHO



Right on the border of Jianwai SOHO and the noisy East Third Ring Road stands **Anping Gujie Meishiguan** (An Ping Ancient Street Dainty Saloon). A modern-styled restaurant, but not in your face about it, this joint is a specialist in the famed cuisine of the ancient town of Anping in Taiwan.

Anping is best known for its fried shrimp rolls, or *Anping zha xiajuan*, and this restaurant provides authentic versions, down to the unusual wrappers made of pork fat that looks like a fishing net. The fillings are made of shrimp, chunks of fat and shallots. All that caloric sin makes these delicacies irresistible.

A far healthier, yet also tasty dish is the *suantouji* (braised chicken stuffed with garlic), in which a whole chicken is stuffed with garlic and cooked in a labor-intensive process that justifies the 88 yuan price. Or start with a spate of Taiwan sausage (18 yuan), cooked the authentic Taiwanese way with no starch.

For a taste of more everyday fare on the other side of the Straits, check out the *cangyingtong* (fried beans with fermented soybeans, 22 yuan), made of a delicious mix of basic, rustic ingredients like chive flowers, minced meat, preserved eggs and fermented soybeans. Wash it all down with real Taiwan *gongfu* tea in a range of varieties.

**Where:** 39 Zhonglu, East Third Ring Road, Chaoyang **Open:** 10 am - 2 am **Average cost:** 35 yuan **Tel:** 5869 2083

Deeper in the Jianwai SOHO realm is a small but special restaurant, **Mifen Xiangxiang**, or Ground Rice Village. The countryside-style of the interior decor carries through to the food, as the pride of the kitchen is humble *mifen* rice noodles, cooked a la Guilin.

Simple-sounding mifen offer few calories for plenty of stomach-filling starch and taste great, picking up flavor from toppings and the broths in which they are served.

At Mifen Xiangxiang, the noodles' soup is made from chicken and pig bones boiled for hours with Chinese spices, and then the dishes are topped with crisp, rich fried pork and beef. Another perfectly good rice noodle option, *zhengzong Guilin mifen* (18 yuan), comes without soup and should be tried. Mifen even stars in some breakfast items, along with tender wontons.

**Where:** Room 20104, Building 2, Jianwai SOHO **Open:** 7:30 am - 12 pm **Average cost:** 20 yuan **Tel:** 5869 2096

**Three Guizhou Men**, or Sange Guizhou Ren, is one of the fashionable restaurants that made the unusual cuisine of remote Guizhou province a big deal in Beijing in the past few years. After doing great business from a quiet location near Yong'anli, the three Guizhou owners decided to open a new, even more fashionable version inside Jianwai Soho.

The menu still offers authentic versions of Guizhou classics, which use flavorings and materials unlike any other regional cuisine of China. Examples include sour fish soup (*suantang yu*, 36 yuan per 500 g), based around a funky, red broth made from fermented tomatoes and soft and slightly gummy rice tofu (*midoufu*).

This latest restaurant is more ele-

gant than its artsy predecessor, yet offers the same popular food and reasonable prices. But located on the south end of the complex, facing a construction wall (like several other new Soho eateries), there may be reason to fear for the new Three Guizhou Men's survival.

**Where:** 17 Business Street, Building 7, Jianwai SOHO **Open:** 11:30 am - 10:00 pm **Average Cost:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 5869 0598

Tucked further down the same alley is **Bangkok Bangkok**, a new Thai restaurant that offers solid Thai standards at relatively reasonable prices. Among the stars is the appetizer seafood salad with cherry tomatoes (38 yuan), which gets a good kick from liberal lashings of mint and chilies.

The head chef recommends the deep fried shrimp topped with chopped pork (38 yuan), and many customers vouch for the quality of the restaurant's beef and chicken curry options (35 yuan each). Hoping to grab the office lunch crowd, Bangkok Bangkok offers seven mid-day set meals of a starter salad and main course priced at only 18 yuan each.

**Where:** Building 7, Jianwai SOHO **Open:** 11 am - 10 pm **Average Cost:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 5869 3423

**Get into Grandma**  
By Tom Spearman

Ah, the joys of a hamburger where they ask you how you want it cooked. This is a most uncommon privilege in Beijing. At **Grandma's Kitchen**, we ordered rare and rare it came, tender and tasty. Big, but not quite "Texas-sized" as claimed on the menu. Still, if you've had your fill of McDonald's lately, try this.

If you go to Grandma's Kitchen for lunch or dinner, you might want to skip the entrees and concentrate on the main event. The chicken caesar salad (35 yuan) sounded tempting but turned out to be pretty boring: strips of fried chicken over tasteless iceberg lettuce with some nondescript dressing. After that, we were glad they forgot to cook the potato chowder (25 yuan) we'd ordered, particularly as the main courses turned out to be enormous.

The Texas-sized hamburger (38 yuan) was quite fantastic and came with a generous helping of chips. The Philly cheesesteak sandwich (a steal at just 28 yuan) was appropriately colossal. Not an option, this, for those who like their polite dining decorum, but then they probably wouldn't come to a self-consciously rustic American restaurant like this anyway. No, the Philly cheese monster involves getting your hands good and oily, cheese, steak and fried peppers spilling out the side as you tuck in.

There are other tempting sandwich options available here, such as Grandma's club, with smoked turkey, bacon, lettuce, tomato and honey mustard. More elaborate dinner options include fillet of beef wrapped with bacon (78 yuan) and grilled salmon steak in mushroom cream sauce (88 yuan). Perhaps the ideal choice would be from the steak menu, each item apparently "100 percent American grain-fed cuts." Sounds rich, but it's all pleasantly affordable.

There's also an impressive beer menu, including Coopers, Budvar and Erdinger.

Grandma's Kitchen is also well known for its breakfasts, with options such as "The Old Timer" and "The American" offering staples like eggs cooked to order, sausages and country bacon. Another breakfast option for the super-hungry is country-fried steak, pretty reasonable at just 55 yuan. But somehow they've got the idea that a "Continental" breakfast involves a couple of croissants and some fruit – for 35 yuan? All breakfast options include bottomless cups of freshly brewed coffee.

**Where:** No. B/0103 Jianwai Soho **Open:** 7:30 am - 11 pm **Average cost:** 70 yuan **Tel:** 5869 3055

**Shiny, Happy Fusion**  
By Gareth George

Specializing in fusion dishes – Cantonese and Thai food with a Western twist – **Food Plus Food** sits smack in the middle of the polished, Ipod-esque Jianwai Soho business district. But be warned: this restaurant features color combinations that most professional golfers would regard as over the top. Bubble gum primaries dance next to pastels. The staff wear fast food style uniforms, the tea comes in garish plastic beakers. Subtle it ain't, and the lights? Well, you won't fall asleep.

You expect a restaurant with a sense of itself to reflect its food in its style, and boy, does Food Plus Food deliver. We tried the barbecue pork belly 'Macau style', thin slivers of pork with an American mustard dip and a bowl of sugar (35 yuan) that were aggressively sweet, but not sickly. Next came a dish of spectacular looking fried sweet pork spare ribs (32 yuan). Thick, crimson and iridescent with sweet fat, the inch or so of meat lifted away from the bone like it had been just waiting for the invitation.

Simple headings make the menu easy to negotiate for fusion virgins. The dishes in every section range from fairly standard Cantonese to downright bizarre (ever wanted offal with your rice porridge?) Listings include variations of Thai, Cantonese, hot pot, barbecue, steamed dishes, seafood, porridge, vermicelli and a page of exotic delicacies like sharks fin and bird's nest soups – each with Food Plus Food's signature quirks.

We found the congee in a pot – rice porridge to most of us – with fish and cabbage (18 yuan) made for a mildly peppered antidote to the sugary wrecking ball of the other dishes, and prepared us for the next round. Thai satay chicken (22 yuan), lean and fresh looking, had a mouth-wateringly herby fragrance. The butter-colored flesh oozed what tasted like maple syrup, while a rich coconut dip accompanied, although it was, needless to say, as delicate as a headlock.

If you have kids reluctant to shift much past Pizza Hut, Food Plus Food serves quality dishes that under-12s would die for. For the rest of us, check the small print in your dental plan and bring your narcoleptic friends.

**Where:** No. 0101, Jianwai SOHO **Open:** 9:30 am - midnight **Average cost:** 40 yuan **Tel:** 5869 0983

## Curry Revival



By Tom Spearman

Fans of the old Omar Kayyam restaurant will recognize the smiling face of maitre'd Daya Shankar Prasad at the **Raj**, an attractive new establishment near Houhai. Compared to the old favorite, the Raj turns out to be an improvement all round. From entering through the bamboo doors, it's obvious a lot of attention has been paid to the decor, with enormous lampshades illuminating the fabric partitions and small statues in the stone alcoves. The restaurant feels exclusive, hidden away and cozy.

The menu is certainly extensive and choices come hard, so order a couple of starters such as the delicious vegetable samosa and papadum to chow on while you pore over the many options.

The tandoori specialties sound mouthwatering enough to make you want to order all of them, but we opted for the Raj mix grill (50 yuan), offering an assortment of lamb, chicken and fish tikka. This turned out to be the best tikka dish any of us had had in Beijing. The usual favorites such as chicken tikka and seekh kebab are of course also available. Mystifying though it may seem to this reviewer, there are those who like their Indian cottage cheese options, so we chose the paneer tikka akbari (25 yuan) which turned out to be surprisingly inoffensive; that is, the peppers on the side were crunchy, spicy and wonderful. But then to the chicken korma, rogan josh, navratan korma and lahmee biryani – ah, that was more like it. The lamb in the rogan josh (40 yuan) was amazingly tender and the sauce was thick and pungent but not too spicy. The chicken korma (35 yuan) was mild and nicely cooked but perhaps a little underwhelming. The navrattan korma (25 yuan), vegetables cooked in a curry sauce with nuts and coriander, was popular all round and the perfect antidote to the spicier items. Basmati rice can often be a bit of a disappointing afterthought, but the lahmee biryani bahisti (25 yuan) smelled wonderful and the chunks of lamb were perfectly cooked. For those with room left for naan bread, there are onion, garlic, minced meat and vegetable options.

While prices of Indian restaurants in other parts of Beijing seem ludicrously high, the Raj offers food that can match any of them at far more affordable rates and in much more appealing surroundings. Plus, the restaurant's a short step from the most thriving bar scene in Beijing.

**Where:** No. 38 Maoer Hutong, Dianmenwai, Dongcheng **Open:** 11:30 am - 11 pm **Average cost:** 100 yuan **Tel:** 6401 1675



Rogan josh and chicken tikka masala, 40 yuan each



Tandoori mirch bharna, 20 yuan

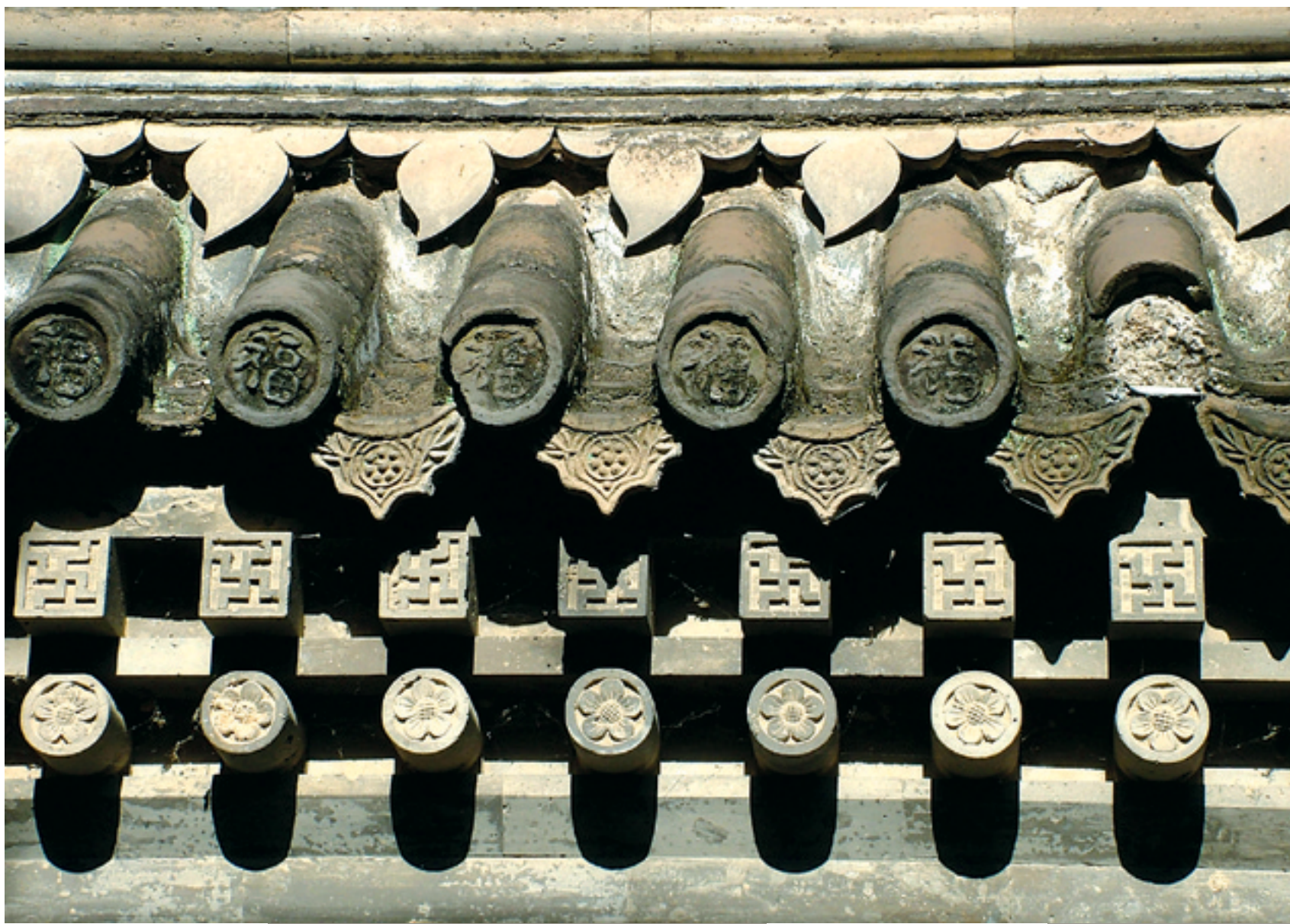


Kashmiri naan, 22 yuan



By Zhang Jianzhong





By Peng Juan

It is described as “a world outside the world” for its unpolluted harmony of nature and human culture. Perched halfway up a mountain, never visited by wars and unfrequented by outsiders, the centuries-old houses and customs still retain their primitive simplicity.

Yangjiayu is an ancient village in Mengtougou District, about 86 kilometers west of Beijing. As a fragmented stele of the Ming Dynasty records, the village was originally the residential complex of the Yang family clan. First constructed in the Liao Dynasty (916-1125), it reached its peak of prosperity in the late years of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), with at most 100 households. Adjacent to the Western Hills ancient trail, the village used to be a stopover for traveling merchants in ancient times. However with the building of a road along the foot of the mountain, the trail fell into disuse, while many young people left their home there for a better life in the bustling cities.

The layout of the village follows the shape of the character 甩, which has the Taoist connotation of studiousness. Yangjiayu is the site of numerous rich cultural relics, such as the temple, stele of chastity and inscriptions, which has given it the reputation of a “scholarly village.” As well as spectacular natural scenery, it boasts some of China’s best-preserved ancient folk residential complexes.

#### Protected by sacred pines

The villages in Zhaitang area are all protected by one or two “village trees,” which are regarded as a kind of (usually) benevolent deity.

At the entrance of Yangjiayu village are two ancient pines, named the Dragon Pine and the Phoenix Pine, each over a thousand years old and some 20 meters high, with lush branches and leaves and enormous trunks.

Legend has it that the God of the Dragon Pine caused the entrance of local landlord Yang Maofa’s mansion to be blocked with piles of mud and sand. To placate the god, Yang performed many good deeds for the villagers, building the Pilu Temple, the Wenchang Pavilion and the Bodhisattva Hall.

The Dragon Pine bears a deep scar on its trunk left by a lightning strike. The Phoenix Pine is also known as the “Disaster Alarm”, by the villagers, who say it

## Mountain Village Home



Above: Perched halfway up a mountain, the centuries-old houses and customs still retain their primitive simplicity.

Right: The Phoenix Pine is over a thousand years old.

Photos by Ding Fengyuan

makes a strange, unearthly sound as a warning of impending danger.

The villagers consider the two pines to be their intimate friends, who know all the secrets of each family, since their roots extend in all directions, beneath every household. The Yang clan also ascribes its survival for generation after generation and their ability to maintain their ancient lifestyle, undisturbed by the ever-changing outside world to the protection of the pines.

#### Museum of ancient residences

Within the village, locals sit in twos and threes in front of the simple courtyard, chatting or just resting. Some in straw hats bend over their plants, some carry their fruits and bottles on shoulder poles, and some dry the ripened crop on the roofs. Set off by the sunlight and the green mountain, the village appears peaceful, serene and warm.

The brick-structured and

tile-roofed buildings are laid out with a clear division between the wealthy in the north and the poor in the south. The northern houses are mostly supported by four beams and eight pillars, decorated with brick bas-reliefs, wooden engravings and screen walls. In the southern part of the village, you will be attracted by the peculiar roofs of green flagstones instead of tiles, since the flagstones are cheaper and also convenient for airing the crops.

There are few trace of modernization to be seen in the village. The villagers still drink water from the age-old stone wells, and the furnishings in each household have a distinct flavor of the 1960s.

#### Traces of religion

At the village entrance are the remains of a temple where three gods – the Dragon King, the Silk-worm King and the King of Trees were once worshipped. These deities were rarely seen in other temples

in Beijing. In the middle of the main hall was the gilded clay statue of the Dragon King, waited on by gods of Thunder, Lightning and Wind. On one side stood the King of Trees, holding a pine branch in his hand, and on the other, the Silk-worm King, the protector of the village’s silk making industry. The three statues are long gone, as is the silk-worm business.

#### Strolling through antiquity

Walking along the rough dirt and stone trails, traces of primitive agricultural life can be seen in the stone mortars where grain is processed and in the stone gutters beside the wells where the villagers wash vegetables and clothes.

There once stood a grain mill where the villagers could work sheltered from the wind and rain. This mill was destroyed by fire and rebuilt in 1951, but it is dilapidated and unused now. A couplet above the door can still be made out, reading “First come, first served.”

In the hallway of the former residence of Yang Zifang, a scholar in the late years of the Qing Dynasty, bulletins publicizing the promotion of a village official in the Qing Dynasty and offering congratulations to eight graduates in the 12th year of Republic of China are exhibited.

There are five wells in the sparsely populated village, named the wells of Longevity, Cultivation, Learning, Weaving and Beauty, in line with Chinese Five Elements of metal, wood, water, fire and earth. Legend has it, there were once five springs. The villagers piled stones around the springs which later became wells, supplying water to the whole village.

#### Tips:

Red apricots and almond kernels grown in Yangjiayu are delicious. You can buy some from the villagers at 2-2.5 yuan per 500 grams.

#### Getting there:

Drive to Mengtougou via Fushi Road from the West Fourth Ring Road, and then turn northward to Junzhuang village. From there take National Highway 109 to Junxiang, turn left at Wulong Restaurant. After driving a further 6 kilometers, you will come to a fork. Take the mountain road about 2 kilometers to Yangjiayu.

Alternatively take bus No. 929 from Pingguoyuan to Junxiang. From there, a taxi to Yangjiayu costs 10 to 15 yuan.

## Around Yangjiayu

#### Baiyu Village

Located 12 kilometers north of Zhaitang, Baiyu village is also near the Western Hills ancient path. Famed for beautiful landscape such as Mt. Plum Blossom and the Fairy Lake, it is also the site of many cultural relics, such as cliff carvings along the ancient path, ruins of Tianjin Gate, ancient kilns, Goddess Temple, Linggong Temple, Wudao Temple and the remains of a Japanese blockhouse.

#### Yi xian tian at Longmengou

Located 10 kilometers north of Zhaitang, the two mountains of Longmengou, when viewed from afar, seem to be as a whole extending into the far distance, but at the mountain foot you’ll see a small vertical crack between the two steep mountains, narrow at the top and wider at the bottom. Villagers call the small crack *yi xian tian* (a line of sky). The spectacle has become a popular tourist attraction, and many stories have sprung up about its origin.

The site of She Yin (Snake Prints) in the valley, according to legend, was caused by a giant snake that was struck by lightning.

#### Mt. Zhuaji

Mt. Zhuaji is to the south-east of Zhaitang at 1,524 meters above sea level. The name, which means “hair bun,” is a reference to the shape of the mountain, which is said to resemble a woman’s hair coiled into two towering peaks, or “buns.”

#### Shuang Long Xia (Twin Dragon Gorge)

Twin Dragon Gorge, 2 kilometers east of Zhaitang, stretches 15 kilometers, with its highest peak at 1,646 meters above sea level. It is known for its lush vegetation, luxuriant flowers and waterfalls. It is the site of such popular scenic spots as the First Waterfall West of Beijing, Sun-Moon Lake, Fairy Bay and Ox Horn Lake. The frozen waterfall hanging from the precipitous cliff in late spring is a spectacular scene visitors should not miss.

## Trek to Clean

## Qomolongma

By Fan Xuedong / Peng Juan

The world’s highest peak lies on the border of Nepal and China, part of the Himalayan Mountain range which stretches across the north of India through to Afghanistan in the west.

To the Tibetans it is known as Qomolongma – the Goddess Mother of Earth. In Nepal its name is Sagarmatha – Mother of the Universe. Westerners know it as Mount Everest. Whatever you call it, it is a sacred mountain to millions of people.

In September this year, I was offered a dream assignment. I was invited to participate as a volunteer and journalist in the 2004 Clean-up Qomolonma expedition. Although I had never in my life been above 2,000 meters, I had long cherished an ambition to visit Mt. Qomolongma.

Within a week I was on my way to the Everest Base Camp at 5,120 meters above sea level, together with other 27 volunteers. I was to report on the clean-up, while taking part in the work as best I could.

It wasn’t until 1953 that the summit of Qomolongma was finally conquered, by Sir Edmund Hilary and Tenzing Norgay. Since then, hundreds of expeditions have set out to climb to the top.

Not surprisingly, the increase in adventurers and tourists has led to an increase in litter – plastic, paper, abandoned tents, equipment and oxygen bottles. Compounding the problem is that, because of the extreme cold, very little of this rubbish decomposes.

It has been calculated that more than 600 tons of waste have been left on Qomolongma since 1921, when man first set foot on the mountain, and it has been growing by an annual rate of 45 tons in recent years.

The world’s highest mountain had become the world’s highest garbage dump, an insult to the mountain and those who love her.

On September 10, our team of 28 volunteers from all over the world, 12 members from the Tibetan Mountaineering Team and 50 local Tibetans, set out for the Base Camp via Lhasa, Shigatse and Tingri.

We were divided into two groups. The first group, which I was in, was to clean the section from Lhasa to the Base Camp, while the other group, consisting of two volunteers and the Tibetan Mountaineering Team members, was to clean the section from the Base Camp to the area at 6,500 meters above sea level.

There is roughly only half the amount of oxygen at the altitude of the Base Camp as there is at sea level. Consequently, everything is harder to do, even sleeping. Until one acclimatizes, the thinner air tricks the body into thinking it is suffocating, and most of us woke up with a heavy head, gasping desperately for breath.

We set out early in the morning and formed teams of twos and threes and hiked slowly up the trail. The expedition was a lesson in physical and emotional survival in one of the harshest atmospheres on earth.

It was freezing cold and the trail was very rugged. After only 10 minutes, the clear sky turned abruptly into dense fog, reducing visibility to just a few meters, and wind and snow soon followed.

The trek became increasingly difficult with each step upward, and every piece of garbage was a greater challenge to pick up.

Dazed and out of breath, the three-hour clean-up ate up my strength little by little. I felt as if my body was slowly wasting away.

A climber of the Tibetan Mountaineering Team helped me with my photographic equipment. It was not the first time that he took part in the clean-up expedition. “It is really a tiring task. But Qomolongma is our home,” he said.

We put the garbage into the vehicles pulled forward by yaks. Yaks are wonderful animals, capable of carrying heavy loads in high altitudes.

When night fell, we joined the second group at the terminal 5,200 meters above sea level. They had trekked down from 6,500 meters above sea level, bringing garbage carried by 15 yaks.

During our 15-day stay in Tibet, we 28 volunteers cleaned away 8 tons of garbage from the vicinity of Qomolongma.

What I had at first thought would be the realization of a dream is now a source of anguish to me when I consider the damage people have done to this once pristine wilderness.

Hopefully, future expeditions will carry away with them more garbage than they take in with them.



Photo by Fan Xuedong